Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. July 1875.

CONFIDENTIAL.

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424

CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

CASES

OF ALLEGED

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

IN

TURKEY.

34

1873–75.

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RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

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1873-75.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Correspondence respecting Cases of alleged Religious Persecution in Turkey.

No. 1.

Vice-Consul Green to Earl Granville.—(*Received September* 1.)

(No. 25.)

Damascus, August 12, 1873.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 24 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith the copy of a further despatch I have this day addressed to Sir Henry Elliot on the measures taken by the Military Authorities against the disturbed districts of this Province.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Vice-Consul Green to Sir H. Elliot.

Damascus, August 12, 1873.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that I this morning called upon Yawer Pasha, the Commander-in-chief of the Syrian army corps.

His Excellency informed me that the Hauran Arabs, having shown a disposition to offer resistance to the troops already sent into their district (see despatch of the 8th instant), he had dispatched a reinforcement, consisting of a regiment mounted on dromedaries. Further troops had also received their marching orders, and his Excellency was only awaiting to hear of the effect that would be produced by their arrival in the Hauran to decide whether it would be necessary for him to take personal command of the expedition. Yawer Pasha stated that he had ordered his officers not to lose their time in making razzias on the flocks and herds of the Arabs, but to send him "heads" in proof of the rebels having been properly punished.

The Commander-in-chief further told me that he had had to send a regiment of Infantry to the Jebel Kelbiah, the district inhabited by the Ansairiyeh, who have lately been setting at defiance the local authorities.

The impression here is, that the disturbances in the Hauran have been instigated by the heads of one or two of the principal families of this city, who have been accustomed to fill the posts of Lieutenant-Governors in the Vilayet, but who have now been set aside by Turks who have received their appointment direct from the Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 2.

Sir H. Elliot to Earl Granville.—(*Received September* 1.)

(No. 298.)
Therapia, August 21, 1873.

My Lord,

WITH reference to Mr. Consul Moore's despatch of the 24th ultimo, relative to the termination of the inquiry into the late occurrences in the Grotto of the Nativity at Bethlehem, I have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of the *procès-verbal* of the Franco-Turkish Commission, instituted for the settlement of that question, which I have obtained from the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 2.

Procès-verbal relatif aux décisions prises au sein de la Commission chargée du rétablissement du *statu quo* atteint dans la Grotte de la Nativité, et de l'examen des événements qu'ont eu lieu à Bethelem le 25 Avril, 1873.

Réparation de l'Autel.—L'Autel Latin, dit des Rois Mages, situé au sud de la Grotte, dans la partie de la crèche, sera réparé en l'état où il se trouvait avant le 25 Avril, par les soins de la Commission et à la charge de l'autorité locale.

Remplacement de la Bande d'Etoffe.—Ce morceau d'étoffe appliqué à la partie de la voute entre l'autel de la nativité et la crèche sera fourni par les Latins, qui en conserveront la possession, et posé par son Excellence le Gouverneur de la Palestine. Il est entendu qu'il doit avoir les mêmes dimensions que celui qui a été détruit.

Remplacement de l'Armoire.—Il sera replacé dans la cavité située au bas de l'escalier gauche de la Grotte une armoire mobile en bois, de la même dimension que cette cavité, et donc l'usage appartiendra exclusivement aux Latins.

Enquête.—Les Commissaires, pour des raisons dont ils ont rendu compte à leurs Gouvernements respectifs, trouvant qu'il y a lieu de renoncer à l'enquête, décident d'un commun accord de prendre par la voie administrative les résolutions suivantes :—

1. Les Commissaires Ottomans demanderont à la Sublime Porte le changement de l'Evêque Grec de Bethelem avec le Sacristain Athanas et les deux moines Maximos et Simion.

2. Le Délégué Français s'engage à obtenir avant l'expiration de trois mois le changement du Supérieur du Couvent Latin de Bethelem, du curé Agostino, et du frère Ilias de Nazareth.

Indemnité.—3. Attendu que les Latins comme les Grecs réclament l'indemnisation des dommages qu'ils ont eu à souffrir pendant l'événement de Bethelem, et que l'accord n'avait pu s'établir sur ces réclamations non admises en principe jusqu'ici par les Commissaires Ottomans à cause du défaut de précédent et des difficultés extrêmes de la vérification, néanmoins la Commission, en comparant les dommages des deux communautés d'après l'état dressé sur les lieux à la suite des événements, constate que les pertes des Latins surpassent celles des Grecs, et qu'il y a lieu de fixer le montant de cette différence à 500 livres ; et en présence du refus des Grecs de rembourser cette somme, les Commissaires Ottomans soumettent la question à la décision de la Sublime Porte.

Jérusalem, le 15 *Juillet*, 1873.

(Signé) ROUSTAN.
ZIVER.
M. KIAMIL.

No. 3.

Sir H. Elliot to Earl Granville.—(*Received September* 28.)

(No. 340.)
Therapia, September 17, 1873.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the copy of a despatch which I have written to Mr. Consul-General Eldridge, in reply to his despatch of the 28th ultimo, respecting the change which is being made in the constitution of the Christian regiment of Dragoons stationed in Syria.

Although I shall make a further appeal to the Porte to prevent the character of this regiment from being altered, I have little expectation of its being attended by success.

Raschid Pasha and the Grand Vizier may, perhaps, agree with me ; but the want of all authority over the different Departments of the State has reached such a pitch that the Minister of War is not likely to be interfered with in organizing the troops exactly as he may think fit, and without regard to political considerations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 3.

Sir H. Elliot to Consul-General Eldridge.

Therapia, September 17, 1873.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch of the 28th ultimo, on the subject of the transformation which is being made in the Christian Dragoon Regiment stationed in Syria.

Upon receiving the former communications from you on the same subject, I pointed out to the Porte how undesirable it was to alter the constitution of the regiment, which had been shown to work satisfactorily, and several of my colleagues spoke in the same sense; but it was generally admitted that although we might do this unofficially, there was nothing in the "Règlement du Liban" which would authorize us to make an official pretext in regard to the constitution of a regiment not quartered in the mountain.

I shall, however, again call the attention of the Porte to the inexpediency of the cause which is being adopted.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 4.

Consul-General Longworth to Earl Granville.—(*Received September* 29.)

(No. 24. Political.)
Belgrade, September 22, 1873.

My Lord,

THE state of Bosnia at this moment is such as to excite the most serious alarm in the mind of the Government here. The elements of combustion and disorder are such, it would appear, as to render a conflagration, if not imminent, certainly inevitable. Both Christians and Mussulmans are wrought upon with a double purpose, it is believed, of producing a conflict between them, and predisposing them on both sides to seek protection from Austria.

While the weakness of the Porte's administrative authority is falling everywhere into contempt, Austro-Hungarian emissaries are employed among the Latin Christians to excite disaffection, which the Mussulmans, provoked, at the spirit they show, seem strongly to resent, and as a natural consequence, instances of violence and oppression constantly occur.

Intelligence of such conduct on the part of some of the feudal proprietors in the district of Bania-Luka was communicated here by letters of the Servian propaganda, and was of course much exaggerated, so much so, indeed, that I omitted to notice it in my own despatches.

In one case, in which a woman was said to have been the victim, torture was reported to have been applied. A panic seized the inhabitants of that district, and more than thirty families from Gradiska, inveigled by the acts of the same emissaries, took refuge in the Austrian territory, beyond the Save. An inquiry into the causes which led to this emigration was instituted at Serajevo; and we are informed that Mustapha Assim Pasha, the Vali of Bosnia, accompanied by M. Theodorovitch, the Austrian Consul-General, proceeded to investigate these matters on the spot.

The result, as tending to inculpate the Mussulmans, was unsatisfactory ; but this is here attributed to the gross partiality of the Consul, who was instructed to favour the Mussulmans.

We hear, from Vienna, that a deputation from the fugitives addressed petitions to the Government, and to the Representatives of the great Powers; but that these were

unattended to, as their statements had not been confirmed by the reports of M. Theodorovitch. To make matters worse, if possible, we now hear that the property of the fugitives has been confiscated.

Your Lordship will perceive, by the inclosed article from the Servian journal "Vidov Dau," dated 17th September, and of the "Obzor" of Croatia, of 27th August, the impressions produced in Servia by these proceedings of M. Theodorovitch, who was made Consul-General at the recommendation of M. Kallay, who subsequently visited him at Serajevo. I was told by that gentleman himself, that while there some fears had been entertained of an outbreak of Mussulman fanaticism, in consequence of the permission given to the Christians of Zoornik to put up bells in their churches, and that the British Consul, Mr. Holmes, had strongly insisted on measures being taken to avert the danger of a massacre, which M. Kallay affected to ridicule. I was at the time struck with the view he seemed to take of the critical state of affairs there; but I since thought it was of a piece with the rest of his policy, which is calculated to humour the fanaticism of the Bosniac Mussulmans, which the Porte had till recently made itself unpopular by repressing.

I cannot help thinking, on the other hand, that the encouragement the Porte has received from Austria in refusing to evacuate Little Zoornik has also been given with an interested object.

I have elsewhere informed your Lordship, that the aim of the Austro-Hungarian Agent, with the countenance and connivance of his Russian colleague, has latterly been to establish the ascendancy of his government in Servia.

As an additional means of pressure, the possession of Little Zoornik would, if Austrian manœuvres succeeded in Bosnia, give her a foothold on the Servian territory, which, when the Porte should be supplanted in these parts, would materially assist in the realization of their project.

The position of the Servian Government, under these circumstances, alarmed by the estrangement of the Porte, which seems also bewildered by them, has been completely undermined; and I should not feel surprized if M. Ristich eventually yielded to the influences he has hitherto so firmly resisted, or resigned his place to others more subservient to those influences than himself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. A. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 1 in No. 4.

Extract from the "Vidov-Dau" of September $\frac{5}{17}$, 1873.

["Vidov-Dau," dans son No. 166 du $\frac{5}{17}$ Septembre, publie un article de fond sur la prohibition à un grand nombre de journaux Serbes d'entrer en Bosnie. "Vidov-Dau," après avoir amèrement critiqué cette mesure, et le Gouverneur Asim Pacha, qui l'a adopté, demande:—]

LES Turcs sont-ils persuadés que cette mesure leur procurera des avantages? Peu, car eux-mêmes ne croient pas beaucoup dans l'existence de leur domination en Europe, et ils n'en usent que plus de barbarie, voulant commander le fer et le feu à la main. Mais les Serbes de la Bosnie, de l'Hercégoine, de la vieille Serbie, et les Serbes de la Principauté pensent tout autrement; nous tous, nous croyons qu'il est temps que nous relevons notre peuple de son état pitoyable.

Comment le pense notre Gouvernement, nous simples travailleurs indépendants d'un journal, nous ne le savons pas; mais ce que nous savons c'est le Gouvernement Serbe se compose de patriotes Serbes, Obrenovitch IV porte le drapeau de Milôche et de Michel, d'éternelle mémoire, et par conséquent les événements qui se passent maintenant en Bosnie doivent émouvoir profondément notre Gouvernement et notre Prince, et ils songeront à écarter le danger qui menace notre nation.

Nous pouvons affirmer que ce n'est qu'en vue de ce grand but que le Prince, d'accord avec son Gouvernement, a inauguré sa politique étrangère, politique qui est vraiment sage. Nous voyons la tendance du Cabinet de Belgrade d'entrer dans les meilleurs rapports avec toutes les grandes Puissances, et nous voyons déjà quelques résultats très significatifs. Pouvons-nous espérer que la Serbie entreprendra bientôt l'exécution de son ancienne et sainte tâche? Si des obstacles imprévus ne surgissent nous ne serons pas deçus dans notre espoir.

En attendant continuons à suivre les événements de la Bosnie et faisons les connaitre

à l'Europe, qui ne veut plus être complice des crimes des Ottomans Asiatiques, qui ne peuvent ni gouverner ni vivre dans l'esprit du progrès et de la liberté. . . . .

Le même journal publie dans le même une correspondance de Constantinople en date 28 Août / 10 Septembre, dont nous extrayons les passages suivantes:—

Mr. Holmes, Consul-Général d'Angleterre à Serajevo, a soumis à son Ambassadeur à Constantinople un exposé complet de l'état des choses en Bosnie, peignant avec des couleurs noires le Gouvernement d'Asim Pacha. Confirme toutes les plaintes que les fugitifs de la Bosnie ont soumis aux grandes Puissances, et ajoute qu'il se reproduira des événements dangereux si la Porte ne change tous les employés et le système même d'administration. Sir Henry Elliot a envoyé une copie de cet exposé à Londres et a attiré sérieusement l'attention du Grand-Vizir sur ces faits. Qu'en dira maintenant l'Ambassadeur Anglais à Vienne? Pourra-t-il encore affirmer que ses renseignements sur l'état des choses en Bosnie disent toute autre chose que ce dont se plaignent les malheureux émigrés. Les Turcs eux-mêmes avarient que le Gouvernement se trouve sur une voie dangereuse et qu'une catastrophe est inévitable.

Inclosure 2 in No. 4.

Extract from the "L'Obzor" of August 27, 1873.

["L'Obzor," journal Croate, donne dans son No. 196 du 27 Août les notices suivantes:]—

ON nous écrit de Constantinople que le Moutesarrif de Banialouka a été destitué et que bientôt il sera suivi par Asim Pacha, Gouverneur de la Bosnie, qui se trouve actuellement à Banialouka en société du Consul-Général d'Autriche à Serajevo, M. Théodorovitch, dont la conduite plus qu'amicale envers le Vali agite les esprits de la population Chrétienne de cette contrée. Suivant nos renseignements M. Théodorovitch se conduit de la sorte à faire croire qu'il favorise Asim Pacha. La diplomatie Austro-Hongroise se serait-elle déjà repentie du peu de sympathie qu'elle avait accordé aux Chrétiens.

Nous apprenons d'une source positive qu'il est fort question que M. Kallay, actuellement Consul-Général et Agent Diplomatique à Belgrade, sera envoyé à Athènes, et que M. Théodorovitch sera nommé à sa place. On parle avec encore plus d'assurance que le Vice-Consul de Banialouka, M. Dragantchitch, sera rappelé; on dit même qu'il est déjà rappelé et qu'il n'attend que son successeur. Nous espérons que, puisque on change ces deux Agents en Bosnie, on enverra à leur place des hommes qui jouiront plus de confiance du peuple de cette Province, et qu'ils sauront réprésenter avec plus d'énergie les intérêts si négligés du commerce Autrichien, bien que jugeant d'après l'expérience on puisse dire: "Il arrive rarement quelque chose de mieux après." Le rappel de Dragantchitch nous paraît comme un désaveu de sa conduite quelque peu franche en faveur des malheureux fugitifs.

No. 5.

Consul-General Eldridge to Earl Granville.—(Received October 7.)

(No. 29. Political.)

My Lord, *Aleih, September 19, 1873.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, the copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Sublime Porte, reporting the arrest and ill-treatment, by the Turkish Authorities at Lattakia, of three young Ansairiych converts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir H. Elliot.

Aleih, September 19, 1873.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency the following circumstances, which will tend to show that liberty of conscience is not much respected in the outlying districts of this vilayet:—

Three young men of about 30, named Yussef Jedeed, Hassan Maklouf, and Selim Khalaify, of Ansairiych parentage, who were educated many years ago in the schools of the Mission founded at Lattakia by the Rev. Mr. Lyde (a British subject), and who were brought up as Christians and Protestants, a public profession of which faith they have made, and have, as I am informed, always been inscribed as Christians in the Government registers. For some years past they have been employed as teachers in the schools established by the said Mission (which has now passed into the hands of American missionaries with an English coadjutor) in the Ansairiych mountain.

On Sunday, the 7th instant, the Kaïmakam of Lattakia, who was in the mountain village where the schools of which they had charge are situated, summoned them to appear before him and arrested them on the pretext that they were evading the conscription.

I am informed they were grievously ill-treated and made to march to Tripoli, whence they were forwarded by French steamer to Beyrout, where they arrived yesterday; and are to be sent on to Damascus to-day to be enrolled as recruits in the army, contrary to the regulations of the Empire, as I am told they have regularly paid the "aána asharié," or military tax, which is exacted from all Christian subjects of the Porte.

I have, therefore, the honour (being assured of the *bona fides* of the case) to request your Excellency to take steps for the immediate release of these men, and for their return to their homes with a fair indemnity for the suffering and inconvenience they have endured, as a vindication of the liberty of conscience in Turkey, of which so much has of late been spoken and written.

I have instructed Mr. Vice-Consul Green to watch over the fate of these men, and, if possible, to obtain their release and indemnification for the suffering and inconvenience they have been put to.

I may add that there are many complaints of the intollerant, fanatical and overbearing conduct of the present Mutesarrif of Tripoli and his subordinate, the Kaïmakam of Lattakia towards Christians, native and foreign, so that it would be well if an impartial inquiry were instituted into their proceedings. They were both appointed by the ex-Wali, Subhi Pasha.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 6.

Sir H. Elliot to Earl Granville.—(Received October 28.)

(No. 361.)

Therapia, October 10, 1873.

My Lord,

I DELAYED answering your Lordship's despatch No. 208 of the 1st September, in reference to the Christians of Gradiska and of Bosnia in general, till I should have received a statement of the circumstances, which was being drawn up by the Porte, and of which I have now the honour to inclose a copy.

As it may be taken as conveying the deliberate view of the Porte of the events in question, it will not be necessary for me to repeat the language that has been held to me on the subject by Raschid Pasha, who merely gave utterance to what your Lordship will find more fully stated in the paper now transmitted.

Of the truth either of the complaints of the Christians or of the counter-statements of the Porte it is impossible to form any confident opinion, but I believe the very able Reports of Mr. Consul Holmes to convey as accurate a description of the state of the case as can be obtained.

The paper which I am now forwarding contains strong animadversions on the proceedings of the Austrian Agents; and the despatch from Mr. Holmes, of which I likewise inclose a copy, seems to show that they are not without foundation.

Raschid Pasha, in a conversation which I had with him this morning, stated that since the paper was drawn up other facts had been ascertained which still more clearly implicated those Agents in the fomentation of the state of bad feeling now existing between the two races in Bosnia; and Mr. Consul-General Longworth's recent despatches show that he entertains similar opinion.

In reply to Raschid Pasha's remark that with a wild people like the Bosniacs, the encouragement of a foreign Agent was sufficient to push them into excesses, I observed that the tolerance shown by the Ottoman Authorities to acts of violence committed by the Mahomedans upon their Christian neighbours, and the impunity which followed those acts, was an encouragement to lawlessness quite as direct as that to which he had pointed.

Almost all Her Majesty's Consuls concurred in reporting that the nominal equality of Mussulmans and Christians before the law, which had never thoroughly existed in practice, was now in most provinces more illusory than it had been a few years ago, and it was necessary for the Government to show that it was determined to enforce it.

Raschid Pasha admitted that there might be ground for complaint; for the Government had not yet been able to undo the mischievous consequences of the viziriat of Mahmoud Pasha, who had made no secret of his hostility to the Vilayet system, which he had tried to subvert and undermine, and to re-establish the Mahomedan domination which Aali Pasha had endeavoured to weaken by the formation of the Provincial Councils, to which the Christians had sent members.

When I informed Raschid Pasha of the substance of your Lordship's despatch No. 208, and of the wish of Her Majesty's Government that the Porte should, without foreign interference, take the initiative in ascertaining and remedying the grievances of which the Christians of Bosnia might have to complain, but to which your Lordship could not remain indifferent, he said that the inquiry into the circumstances was not completed, but that I might convey the assurance to Her Majesty's Government that it was being conducted with a view to ascertain the truth, and without any disposition to shield any one who might be found to be in fault, from the Governor downwards.

He entirely concurred with Mr. Consul Holmes in attributing much of the unsatisfactory condition of Bosnia to the frequent changes of the Governors-General sent to administer the province; and he deplored the practice, which the present Ministers were most anxious to put an end to.

When the inquiry is concluded he promises to make its results known to me.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 6.

Memorandum respecting the Affairs of Gradiska.

EN présence de la tendance hautement manifestée et inspirée par un sentiment d'hostilité systématique d'attribuer aux incidents de Banjaluka et de Gradiska des proportions que, par leur nature même, ils ne sauraient jamais comporter, le Gouvernement Impérial se doit à lui-même comme il le doit à la vérité d'éclairer l'opinion par un exposé succint, mais rigoureusement exact, des faits que la malveillance, si prête à s'attacher au moindre événement qui se produit dans certaines provinces de l'Empire, essaie en vain de transformer en questions, et qui, par leur nature et leur portée, n'auraient dû, comme on le verra, franchir les limites d'un incident local.

Avant tout et surtout, il n'est point vrai que les Autorités Impériales se soient livrées à des actes arbitraires et vexatoires à l'égard des populations Chrétiennes de ces districts. Il n'est pas non plus vrai que les habitants Musulmans aient fait subir des avanies à leurs compatriotes non-Musulmans, et rien n'a pu établir ces griefs, dont certains agitateurs se sont efforcés de se faire des armes. Par contre les Autorités Impériales ont été à même de constater le mal-fondé des plaintes énoncées, par les dispositions les moins équivoques des délégués orthodoxes et Latins des districts censés les plus exposés aux prétendus procédés vexatoires des fonctionnaires Ottomans et des populations Musulmanes.

Et, en effet, ces délégués, appelés à préciser leurs griefs contre les autorités et les habitants Musulmans, ont été presque unanimes à déclarer qu'ils n'avaient aucunement à se plaindre d'eux; que tous ils jouissaient de la plus complète sécurité sous l'égide des lois de l'Empire; et que leur seule réclamation consistait dans les procédés des dimiers envers les paysans, lesquels demandaient à se substituer régulièrement en leur lieu et

place. Les délégués ajoutaient qu'une fois ce point obtenu, la population agricole, délivrée de la seule vexation qu'elle eut à subir, serait reconnaissante au Gouvernement paternel de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

En regard de ce fait édifiant, on placera évidemment la fuite dans un Etat voisin de vingt-trois habitants de Gradiska ; mais il ne faut pas perdre de vue que les fugitifs n'ont point quitté leur pays pour se soustraire à des mesures de rigueur ; que c'est d'eux-mêmes qu'ils se sont éloignés et qu'en définitive leur retraite en Autriche-Hongrie est un exil volontaire qu'ils ont cru sage de s'imposer à la suite de la démarche d'un des leurs auprès des autorités locales. Voici d'ailleurs les circonstances qui s'y rattachent :—

Au moment où les plaintes des populations Chrétiennes de Banjaluka et de Gradiska se faisaient jour, un certain Stovo, faisant lui-même partie du groupe des agitateurs, est venu informer l'autorité que ces plaintes avaient en vue de provoquer des troubles et qu'elles étaient dues aux instigations des agents soudoyés par les Comités Serbes. A l'appui de ces assertions, Stovo faisait signer une déclaration, quand un des fugitifs, étant survenu, lui a arraché le papier qu'il a porté à "l'Opechtiné," Conseil de la Communauté de Gradiska, dont les membres, rendus immédiatement auprès du Caïmacam, ont vivement réclamé contre Stovo. Le Caïmacam a dû, pour donner à l'affaire une suite légale, citer Stovo devant le tribunal compétent. Mais cette mesure était évidemment loin de convenir aux plaignants. Elle déjouait leurs calculs, ruinait leurs projets, et menaçait d'amener la divulgation des comités révolutionnaires dont ils étaient les affiliés ; aussi ont-ils jugé prudent de se retirer sous un prétexte et le lendemain ils se sont rendus à Gradiska (Autriche). Toutes les assurances tant verbales que par écrit données soit directement, soit par l'entremise du Métropolitain de Sérajévo, ont été impuissantes à les ramener en Turquie ; ils ont constamment subordonné leur retour à l'exécution préalable de leurs demandes, à la destitution du Gouverneur de Banjaluka et du Caïmacam de Gradiska, ainsi qu'à l'exil de quelques commerçants et notables de Banjaluka et de Gradiska. Ces prétentions, appuyées par le Consul-Général d'Autriche-Hongrie à Sérajévo, ont nécessairement été rejetés par les autorités Impériales, qui se sont renfermées dans la déclaration de ne pouvoir punir personne sans procès ni jugement.

Les autorités Impériales, saisies d'un exposé de plaintes portant soixante-six signatures, ont institué une Commission *ad hoc* qui, ayant fait venir les signataires, les a invités tous et chacun en particulier à préciser les procédés oppressifs et vexatoires dont ils auraient été l'objet de la part des fonctionnaires ou d'autrui. La plupart d'entre eux ont déclaré qu'ils n'avaient pas de griefs personnels, excepté ceux qui étaient mentionnés dans l'exposé au nom de la communauté. Les quelques signataires formant la minorité ont prétendu, il est vrai, avoir été victimes de mauvais traitements, d'insultes, et d'autres ; mais leurs allégations, soumises à un examen attentif et minutieux, ont toutes été reconnues comme mal fondées.

En ce qui concerne l'exposé lui-même, il consistait en récriminations contre un long passé ; il énumérait toutes les voies de faits, blessures, assassinats, incendies, qui avaient pu être commis à Gradiska dans l'espace des cinq ou six dernières années. Les autorités Impériales, qui ont la conviction d'avoir fait strictement leur devoir et agi légalement dans tous les cas cités, n'ont pas été en peine pour répondre à ces prétendus griefs, tout en éliminant ceux qui n'avaient pu exister que dans l'imagination des réclamants.

Ainsi, il a été constaté que les plaintes dont les signataires de l'adresse se faisaient l'écho étaient dénuées de tout fondement. Les Commissaires chargé de l'enquête, bien que suffisamment édifiés à cet égard, n'en ont pas moins cru devoir inviter chacun de ces individus, et en s'exprimant pour plus de facilité dans leur propre langue, à exposer tout fait injuste, tout grief ou toute cause d'insécurité qu'on pouvait avoir à reprocher aux autorités Impériales. Sur leur réponse négative, les Commissaires ont dressé un procès-verbal où ils ont consigné le résultat de leur enquête sur chacun des points énumérés dans l'exposé. Comme surcroit de garantie d'indépendance, ce procès-verbal a été communiqué aux plaignants par l'entremise du Métropolitain de Sérajévo, en ce moment à Gradiska, et qui, de son côté, les a exhortés à exposer librement tout ce qui pouvait justifier leurs plaintes et dégager leur responsabilité ; mais cette démarche a eu le même résultat que la première, les plaignants ayant déclaré n'avoir aucune donnée, ni information à fournir, ni plainte à faire. Cette nouvelle réponse ajouté au bas du procès-verbal, a été confirmée par les cachets des greffiers que le Gouverneur-Général et le Métropolitain avaient désignés. Quant aux paysans qui, cédant aux instigations d'un prêtre de Gradiska nommé Youvan Ristich, avaient énoncé des plaintes, ils ont également confondus par les résultats des plus concluants de l'enquête à laquelle leurs démarches avaient donné lieu, et ils ont regagné leurs villages. Mais il n'en a pas été de même pour les meneurs de la ville de Gradiska. Effrayés de la gravité de la responsabilité qui pesait à leur charge et des conséquences de leur imprudente conduite, mais trop

avancés pour pouvoir reculer, ils ont cherché leur salut dans la fuite, et treize d'entre eux les plus compromis sont allés en Autriche-Hongrie rejoindre les autres fugitifs.

Il importe de constater ici que ces individus sont presque tous des affiliés des comités de Banjaluka et de Gradiska, connus sous la dénomination d'Opechtiné ! Formés dans le but apparent d'administrer les affaires des écoles d'enfants et les revenus du métropolitain, ces comités ont en réalité pour but d'exciter les esprits et de fomenter des troubles. Leur institution remonte à peine à quatre années ; limités au début aux deux districts susmentionnés, ils se sont étendus plus tard à d'autres localités et partout aux dépens des conseils des anciens, dont ils ont usurpé les attributions par des empiètements successifs. Bien plus, ils sont allés jusqu'à s'immiscer dans les affaires de tout le district et à percevoir par domicile une certaine somme (5 piastres) en sus de la redevance métropolitaine. Les sommes ainsi recueillies, jointes aux collectes faites de temps à autre au nom des écoles et établissements ecclésiastiques, servent à la propagation de leurs projets dangereux. C'est ainsi que le brigand nommé Pelghitch a reçu deux fois des secours pécuniaires, provenant de sommes ainsi réunies.

Un état de choses pareil ne pouvait être évidemment toléré. Les autorités Impériales manqueraient à leurs devoirs les plus élémentaires si elles n'avisaient pas aux moyens de le faire cesser ; aussi, dès qu'elles en ont été informées par Stovo, se sont-elles empressées d'apposer les scellés sur les livres et documents trouvés dans le local affecté aux réunions du Comité, afin d'examiner ces comptes. Mais des mesures avaient dû être prises, car lors de l'examen des livres et papiers saisis, en présence du Métropolitain, l'on n'a pu retrouver les livres contenant les bilans annuels des recettes et des dépenses. Interpelés, les membres présents du Comité ont répondu que les livres disparus se trouvaient entre les mains des fugitifs. Malgré cela, l'on est parvenu à constater, au moyen des papiers existants, que les collectes par domicile se faisaient périodiquement.

Telles sont les informations que les autorités Impériales sont parvenues à réunir, grâce aux investigations et aux perquisitions domiciliaires qu'elles ont dû ordonner. En attendant que la justice se prononce sur tous les faits constatés, des mesures ont été adoptées pour garantir les créanciers contre toute fraude des fugitifs en question, qui ont laissé dans leur pays des dettes considérables, au payement desquelles ils voulaient se soustraire par des voies détournées ; ils avaient même réussi à donner un commencement d'exécution à leur projet par la vente clandestinement effectuée des marchandises et autres se trouvant dans leurs maisons ou boutiques à Gradiska.

Par ce qui précède, l'on voit que quelques uns des individus en question, interrogés par la justice, ont eu l'audace de mettre en avant des griefs que des enquêtes succesives ont constaté comme étant des allégations mensongères et calomnieuses uniquement combinées en vue de discréditer l'administration de ces districts et de nuire au prestige de l'autorité dans le Vilayet. Laisser de tels individus impunis, ce serait encourager des tendances ouvertement hostiles et compromettre même la sécurité future de la Bosnie. Le soin de garantir l'avenir rend inévitable la nécessité de sévir contre les coupables, et de leur infliger une punition exemplaire ; aussi les autorités Impériales ont-elles dû ordonner l'arrestation des plus suspects, qui auront à rendre compte de leurs démarches et dévoiler les mobiles qui les ont poussés à affirmer si audacieusement que la justice et la sécurité avaient depuis quelques années disparu de leur pays. Les prévenus dûment convaincus subiront les peines qu'ils auront encourues d'après la loi. Cette mesure serait complétée par une série d'autres non moins indispensables ; la suppression immédiate des "Opechtinés" tant de Banjaluka et de Gradiska que des autres districts, et qui feront place aux conseils des anciens tels qu'ils sont prévus et autorisés par les lois de l'Empire avec les attributions et dans les limites légales qui leur sont tracées de s'occuper exclusivement des affaires des villes ou districts auxquels ils appartiennent. Dans le cas où plusieurs de ces conseils devraient s'assembler dans un endroit pour délibérer sur des affaires communes, ces réunions auraient lieu conformément à la loi et seraient subordonnées dans tous les cas à l'avis et aux ordres de l'autorité. Les livres et autres ouvrages d'étude employés dans les écoles d'enfants non-Musulmanes seraient désignés par la Commission de l'Instruction Publique du Vilayet, ainsi que cela a lieu pour les écoles Musulmanes, et les professeurs qui enseigneront à leurs élèves dans les livres et ouvrages autres que ceux indiqués par la Commission seraient punis ainsi que leurs complices, d'après la loi. Les professeurs suspects seraient immédiatement éloignés du pays et remplacés régulièrement par d'autres avec l'approbation de la susdite Commission. Tous les individus reconnus comme étant porteurs de journaux et de livres dangereux auxquels l'entrée du Vilayet est interdite, ou comme les ayant cachés soit dans leurs maisons, soit dans leurs boutiques, soit ailleurs, ou bien comme les ayant distribués, seront mis en jugement et condamnés comme cherchant à provoquer des désordres.

Les mesures arrêtées en principe seraient, toutefois, quant à leur exécution, accompagnées de tous les ménagements possibles. Portées à la connaissance du public par les soins des conseils des anciens, elles contrarieront sans doute vivement les quelques agitateurs qui sont répandus dans les villes, mais, en revanche, la masse de la population Chrétienne, notamment les paysans, accueilleront avec satisfaction des mesures qui sont décrétées dans le but manifeste de les prémunir contre les menées qui les travaillent et de sauvegarder ainsi leurs meilleurs intérêts. Il est permis d'espérer que, grâce aux dispositions prises par les autorités Impériales, le résultat désiré sera obtenu, surtout lorsque l'ancien Vice-Consul d'Autriche-Hongrie, M. Dragancie, considéré comme le chef et l'âme du Comité de Banjaluka, aura été enfin éloigné du pays.

Quant aux agitateurs réfugiés sur le territoire Austro-Hongrois et qui prodiguaient les instigations à ceux de leurs compatriotes qui allaient les visiter, ils ont été réduits à l'impuissance par suite de leur internement dans un endroit dit Novogradiska, distant de deux heures de la ligne frontière et de cinq heures de Gradiska.

D'ailleurs, toutes les récriminations contre les prétendues oppressions et persécutions des Chrétiens ne pourront tromper personne. Les faits sont là pour établir le contraire. Comment, en effet, pourrait-on expliquer la flagrante illégalité que les habitants Chrétiens de Gradiska ont commise impunément en transformant en église, sans y être autorisés par un firman, une bâtisse construite il y a huit ans? Ne serait-on pas autorisé à voir autre chose que le manque de liberté dans la conduite de ces individus qui ont poussé l'oubli des devoirs et des convenances jusqu'à suspendre une cloche dans l'église improvisée, contrairement aux usages du pays et sans autorisation? On serait tenté de se demander si c'est parce que les autorités locales comme la population Musulmane n'y ont fait alors aucune opposition qu'elles sont aujourd'hui accusées d'intolérance et de tyrannie; et quels sont les faits qui leur sont imputés? Ceux qui ont été connus jusqu'à présent n'ont dévoilé aucun crime, aucun délit.

Pour n'en citer qu'un exemple, il suffit de mentionner l'affaire de Guebdjik Alexi, laquelle constitue le principal grief des habitants Chrétiens de Banjaluka, soutenus toujours par un agent étranger.

Cette affaire, autour de laquelle on a fait tant de bruit, consiste en une perquisition domiciliaire opérée, il y a quelques mois, dans la maison du dit Alexi, sise dans la ville de Vartchar, dépendance de Travnik, et près des confins des districts de Banjaluka. Le mudir de Vartchar, informé que deux brigands étaient cachés chez Alexi, s'est rendu à son domicile, accompagné de quelques personnes, pour faire une perquisition. Alexi s'est dit malade et n'a pas paru; mais sa femme et quelques voisins s'étant présentés armés de bâtons ont obligé le mudir et ses gens à se retirer. Quatre jours après cet incident, la femme d'un certain Arnaout-Ahmed, habitant de la même ville, était assassinée par quatre brigands dans sa ferme, sise à une distance d'une demie-heure de Vartchar. Les autorités locales ayant conçu des soupçons sur le Compte d'Alexi et de quelques autres individus, les ont arrêtés et conduites à Pantcha, chef-lieu du district. Après un interrogatoire préliminaire, et au bout de quelques jours, tous les individus ont été mis en liberté à l'exception d'Alexi, qui a dû passer en jugement avec sa femme, en égard aux nombreux indices établissant leur culpabilité. C'est à cette occasion qu'on a confié le soin d'aller rechercher les brigands dont il s'agit au capitaine de garde-frontières, Hussein Agha, accusé de s'être porté à des voies de faits sur la personne de quelques Chrétiens, pour les contraindre à indiquer le refuge des malfaiteurs.

Cette accusation, bien que marquée au coin d'une parfaite invraisemblance, a donné lieu à une instruction régulière. Deux témoins à charge, nommés Marco Marik et Georges Commènovik, interrogés d'une manière officieuse en présence du Consul-Général d'Autriche-Hongrie, ont fait des dépositions si contradictoires que le mal-fondé de la réclamation formulée contre Hussein Agha a été reconnu. M. le Consul, complètement désappointé, a quitté Banjaluka pour retourner le lendemain à Sérajévo, mais il n'a pas tardé à revenir, bien qu'il fut déjà éloigné de six heures, en déclarant qu'un ordre télégraphique reçu du Ministre Impérial et Royal des Affaires Etrangères lui prescrivait de rester à Banjaluka jusqu'à nouvel avis.

Il importe de remarquer qu'après son retour, cet agent a tenu un langage d'une violence de plus en plus accentuée. Il soutenait que les Chrétiens étaient dans tous les cas victimes des procédés oppressifs de leurs compatriotes Musulmans; qu'il serait impossible de parvenir à reconnaître l'état réel des choses au moyen d'interrogatoires, et qu'il faudrait tout simplement, pour contenter et satisfaire les plaignants, destituer le Gouverneur de Banjaluka, le Caïmacam de Gradiska, ainsi que le Capitaine Hussein Agha, et exiler certaines autres personnes appartenant à la classe des notables et des commerçants de Banjaluka et de Gradiska. Vainement a-t-on cherché à faire comprendre à l'agent en question l'impossibilité pour les Autorités Impériales de punir quelqu'un sans

jugement; l'on a fini par acquérir la certitude qu'il serait impossible de le satisfaire à moins de lui dire que la population Chrétienne est réellement opprimée par la population Musulmane et les fonctionnaires du Gouvernement; que les vexations et les actes arbitraires sont si nombreux qu'ils excluent la nécessité d'un jugement, et qu'il n'y a qu'à punir sans autre forme de procès les personnes dont quelques agitateurs se plaignent.

Il n'est pas plus permis de confirmer des griefs dont le caractère mensonger est évident, que de sévir sans jugement contre un certain nombre de personnes rien que pour satisfaire quelques agitateurs. Les Autorités Impériales ont, par contre, le droit et le devoir de punir ces derniers suivant le degré de leur culpabilité, afin d'empêcher la propagation de tendances pouvant porter atteinte à la tranquillité publique. Plus la population non-Musulmane se montre paisible et adonnée à son travail, plus il importe de la prémunir contre toute tentative criminelle de quelques individus sans conscience.

Cependant, la juste sévérité dont les Autorités Impériales font preuve est loin d'exclure l'impartialité. C'est ainsi que, saisies des griefs de "l'Opechtiné" de Banjaluka, elles ont fait en sorte qu'ils soient dûment examinés. L'instruction se poursuit à l'heure qu'il est, et le résultat en sera bientôt connu.

En attendant, il ne serait pas sans utilité de donner un aperçu de ces griefs. Le Comité prétend d'abord que les Musulmans auraient cherché, il y a plus d'un an et demi, à mettre le feu au moyen de matières enflammées placées sous le toit d'une chambre contigue à l'église et dans quelques autres maisons; il réclame contre les retards que subiraient les affaires correctionnelles pendantes devant la cour civile; suivant lui, les Chrétiens seraient si souvent en lutte à des détentions injustes, à des voies de fait et autres, que dans l'espace de deux années et demie 196 d'entre eux seraient morts en prison.

Toutes ces allégations ne sont pas plus fondées que celles qui les ont précédés. Il suffit pour s'en convaincre de considérer les diverses circonstances du fait, et en premier lieu, que la chambre où des matières enflammées auraient été mises à une heure de la soirée à la Turque, est occupée par les écoliers; qu'indépendamment de toute autre circonstance, l'endroit qu'on indique comme ayant été choisi par les incendiaires pour l'exécution de leur projet criminel tient un emplacement qui exclut la possibilité d'une action extérieure, et qu'enfin les investigations les plus complètes auxquelles les Autorités Impériales se sont livrées à cet égard ont eu pour résultat de constater que ce sont les agitateurs eux-mêmes qui ont commis l'acte dont il se plaignent pour pouvoir crier à l'incendie, et à la trahison. Il importe d'ajouter que les autres incendies qu'on a allégués, dus aux mêmes causes ou à des causes accidentelles, ne dépassent guère en nombre ceux qu'on signale dans les quartiers Musulmans ou ailleurs.

En ce qui concerne les retards dont le Comité croit pouvoir se prévaloir dans l'intérêt de sa cause, elles sont presque inévitables; car les affaires qui sont indiquées comme étant en souffrance constituent de cas criminels qui rendent indispensables une instruction longue et approfondie.

Personne n'a donc lieu de s'en plaindre; d'autant plus que les accusés sont presque tous reconnus coupables par des preuves positives et de fortes présomptions.

Quant aux individus qui auraient été soumis à des emprisonnements injustes et prolongés, ainsi qu'à de mauvais traitements et à des tortures, il n'existe, qu'on sache, aucun fait pareil. Les plaignants eux-mêmes invités à en citer quelque exemple ont évité d'indiquer les personnes qui auraient été l'objet de si cruels procédés. Si l'on y ajoute encore la particularité que dans l'espace de trente-un mois, le cas de mort survenus dans les prisons, en comprenant toutes les communautés ensemble, n'ont guère dépassé le chiffre de cinquante-cinq, on saura à quoi s'en tenir sur les allégations du Comité relatives aux 196 personnes qui auraient trouvé la mort de la manière qu'il indique, mais dont il n'a pu citer une seule. Il en est de même de son assertion comme quoi les Chrétiens subiraient des peines plus sévères que leurs compatriotes Musulmans. Rien n'est venu le prouver jusqu'à présent; au contraire, bien des indices tirés de documents authentiques, concourent à constater que l'application de la loi n'a jamais cessé d'être inspirée par le sentiment de stricte impartialité, et que Musulmans ou Chrétiens, tous ont été constamment traités sur un pied d'égalité parfaite.

Le Comité de Banjaluka a été ainsi confondu par l'évidence des faits et l'on ne saurait trouver de termes assez sévères pour qualifier sa conduite. Lorsqu'on le voit imprimer à ses démarches de la dernière insignificance une solennité qu'elles ne comportent pas l'on se demande s'il n'est pas guidé par la pensée de détourner l'attention des autorités de ses actes, et d'assurer ainsi le secret à ses menées, à ses intrigues. Il y a de sérieuses raisons de le croire. Pour leur part, les autorités Impériales en ont acquis la certitude par plus d'un indice. De ce nombre est un acte revêtu de cachets et qui a été trouvé parmi les papiers placés sous scellés du Comité de Banjaluka. C'est un document échangé entre vingt-trois individus et qui bien que conçu en termes conventionnels, n'en

laisse pas moins transpirer le but des signataires, consistant à sanctionner et à assurer leur union secrète. Un autre fait non moins édifiant est venu confirmer les autorités Impériales dans leur conviction : celui de l'introduction de certains livres et brochures séditieux provenant de la Serbie, et destinés à préparer les enfants des écoles à l'idée de l'union Serbe, en leur inspirant la haine de l'Islam. Dans l'exécution de leurs projets criminels, les meneurs trouvent un point d'appui dans une foule de gens qui, déguisés en marchands ambulants, parcourent les villages et excitent les populations.

Un autre concours, non moins précieux, est celui que leur prête l'ancien Vice-Consul d'Autriche-Hongrie à Banjaluka. D'accord avec les "Opechtinés" de Banjaluka et de Gradiska, il unit sa voix aux leurs pour proclamer le manque de confiance dans les autorités Impériales et faire croire à l'oppression des populations Chrétiennes par leurs compatriotes Musulmans. Poursuivant la réalisation de la prétendue Union Serbe, l'ancien Vice-Consul et ses adeptes exagèrent dans un sens favorable à leurs vues les faits les plus vulgaires qui se passent partout ; ils s'ingénient à inventer des événements et des incidents pour les communiquer aux feuilles Serbes qui paraissent en Autriche-Hongrie.

Les meneurs vont plus loin ; ils impriment à leurs actions une direction plus étendue et plus immédiate. Ils ne négligent rien pour travailler l'esprit de la population, et répandent sans cesse dans le pays les bruits les plus controuvés et les mieux combinés pour exciter et perpétuer la haine et l'animosité entre les Musulmans et les Chrétiens.

Pendant tout le temps qu'il a été en fonctions, l'agent susmentionné n'a laissé échapper aucune occasion pour accentuer de plus en plus sa coopération active aux travaux des Comités. Ainsi, le lendemain d'un incendie, qui, il y a un an et demi, a détruit huit baraques servant de débits de boissons, il a concerté une démonstration avec les membres du Comité et, suivant une entente intervenue, il est allé, précédé de quelques commerçants, se plaindre formellement à l'autorité de l'incendie de la veille, et, afin de mieux carnétériser sa démarche, il a jeté l'alarme et réclamé des garanties. Etendant son action, M. Dragancie prétendait couvrir de sa protection tous les affiliés des Comités Panslavistes ; témoin le cas suivant : Un prêtre nommé Jephrem, réfugié il y a quatorze ans en Serbie, était parvenu, il y a un an et demi, à rentrer à Pernavir (Banjaluka) où il se trouvait caché. Aussitôt informées les Autorités Impériales se sont empressées d'examiner les papiers trouvés en sa possession, et en raison d'une lettre compromettante dont il était porteur, de procéder à son arrestation, laquelle a été suivie de l'intervention du Vice-Consul, sous le prétexte que le détenu était sujet Austro-Hongrois. M. Draganeie a obsédé les autorités locales de ses démarches non interrompues au point de paralyser l'action de la justice.

Une pareille attitude est regrettable. Mais, ce qui l'est davantage c'est que celui qui la tenait n'essayait même pas de dissimuler ses sentiments. En effet, malgré le caractère officiel dont il était revêtu, cet agent ne recevait dans ses réunions que les affiliés de ces Comités, à l'exclusion de tout fonctionnaire du Gouvernement. Enfin, l'ex-Vice-Consul a mis le comble à ses intrigues, lors de l'enquête de Gradiska, en réunissant une foule de personnes hors de la ville et en préparant une entrevue entre elles et le Consul-Général Austro-Hongrois à Sérajévo. C'est dans cette entrevue, il est regrettable de le dire, que tout a été combiné et arrêté.

Depuis les meneurs ne laissent échapper aucune occasion pour inventer quelque chose à reprocher aux autorités Impériales. Aveuglés par le parti pris, ils voudraient révoquer en doute les faits les plus évidents. Cette tendance s'est fait jour tout dernièrement encore dans le cas d'une femme Chrétienne poursuivie et blessée légèrement par un individu. A peine ont-elles été informées de cet incident que les autorités Impériales se sont mises en devoir d'ouvrir une enquête. Un jeune homme appartenant à la communauté Latine reconnu comme ayant assisté à la scène et qui avait des tâches de sang sur lui a été arrêté et mis en jugement. Plus d'un indice a établi qu'il était l'agresseur, d'autant plus que ses traits répondaient exactement au signalement donné par la victime. Mais lors de la confrontation, cette dernière, conseillée évidemment par les meneurs, a catégoriquement déclaré que son agresseur était Musulman. Les autorités locales n'ont pas moins cru devoir maintenir en état d'arrestation le jeune homme à la charge duquel existaient tant de preuves accablantes.

Pour clore la série des faits énoncés par les agents des Comités, il importe de mentionner les plaintes que quelques femmes de Gradiska avaient formulées par suite des procédés vexatoires qui auraient été exercés contre leurs époux. Or, les informations les plus authentiques, recueillies sur les lieux, ont établi le mal-fondé de ces plaintes, de sorte qu'on pourrait les ranger parmi tant d'intrigues tramées par les Comités, mais dont la vigilance des autorités Impériales est heureusement parvenue à pénétrer les secrets et à prévenir les conséquences.

La lecture de ce qui précède a suffisamment révélé la marche ascendante qu'ont

suivie les plaintes, les réclamations voire même les accusations gratuites contre l'action des autorités et les procédés des populations Musulmanes de Gradiska et de Banjaluka. Après les plaintes des paysans, formulées par la bouche de leurs délégués, sont venues celles des Comités presque sous forme d'incriminations suivies de près par les allégations accusatrices de M. Draganeie, couronnées enfin par les griefs articulés dans un rapport de M. le Consul-Général Impériale et Royale à Sérajévo et empruntant un nouveau poids au carnetère officiel de cet agent.

Suivant M. le Consul-Général, la population Musulmane, poussée par l'intolérance et le fanatisme, s'oppose à ce que les Chrétiens sonnent des cloches dans leurs églises, et va jusqu'à affirmer son attitude d'hostilité menaçante par des vexations, par des traitements tyranniques, même par des meurtres.

Or, les Musulmans n'ont jamais fait aucune objection à ce que des cloches sonnent dans les églises ; témoin le fait cité au commencement de la présente mémoire. Seulement comme il y a quelque temps, dans les églises nouvellement bâties, tant à Sérajévo que dans d'autres localités, on avait construit de hautes tours destinée à recevoir des cloches, l'autorité a dû, en considération de graves inconvénients locaux, provenant de ce que ces églises ont été bâties dans des quartiers Musulmans et sur un ordre supérieur, s'y opposer. Toutefois, il est à présumer que cette affaire des cloches mise en avant par M. le Consul-Général, soit celle de l'établissement du père Frank Wandelen, religieux Latin de l'ordre des Trappistes, qui a transformé une ferme, qu'il avait fait bâtir sur un terrain lui appartenant, près de Banjaluka, en monastère, en y plaçant une cloche, malgré les nombreuses réclamations de l'autorité auprès de qui de droit, basées sur des motifs puisés dans des considérations locales. Quant aux procédés menaçants, aux prétendus meurtres, etc., cités à la charge des Musulmans, on peut hardiment affirmer que se sont de pures et gratuites accusations ne franchissant jamais la limite de vagues généralités, à tel point qu'on n'a pu jusqu'à présent citer un seul cas, un seul fait, un seul nom. Ces Musulmans sont, il est vrai, profondément attachés à leurs croyances et convictions religieuses, mais de là aux faits graves qui leurs sont imputés il y a un abime que la meillure bonne volonté serait impuissante à franchir. D'ailleurs, il n'est pas difficile de deviner encore ici l'inspiration et de découvrir la main cachée des Comités de Gradiska et de Banjaluka ; un coup d'œil jeté sur les procès-verbaux d'enquête et autres documents concernant les plaintes des "Opechtinés" suffit pour amener une entière conviction dans les esprits les plus prévenus et pour les édifier amplement sur l'inanité de ces plaintes.

Le même vague plane sur les sentiments d'hostilité systématique contre les Chrétiens attribués au Caïmacam de Gradiska et au Mutessarif de Banjaluka. Ici encore on ne précise rien, on ne mentionne aucun cas d'abus de pouvoir, aucune personne dont la cause juste aurait été méconnue. Cependant, il est notoire que les prétendues plaintes des "Opechtinés" étaient antérieures à la nomination de Kiamil Bey au Mutessarifat, et il y a à peine trois mois qu'Emin Effendi est Caïmacam de Gradiska. Mais le premier a su deviner et constater les projets subversifs des comités ; il en a découvert et transmis au vilayet les papiers compromettants, et le second est parvenu à réunir les informations les plus circonstanciées sur les coupables entreprises méditées par le Comité de Gradiska. Ces fonctionnaires n'ont fait que leur devoir en empêchant de criminelles intentions de se traduire en faits. Aussi, ne pouvant citer spécialement aucune illégalité à leur charge, on s'est jeté dans le système des récriminations générales qui semble être inspiré par un mot d'ordre.

Pour ce qui est des perquisitions domiciliaires qui auraient été faites chez les habitants notables de la Bosnie, sous le prétexte qu'ils auraient recélé des brigands, mais en réalité pour leur faire payer une certaine somme et les relâcher ensuite, les autorités Impériales opposent à ces allégations le plus formel démenti. Elles comprennent dans les mêmes dénégations, les accusations portées contre quelques fonctionnaires et notables comme étant les instigateurs des avanies dont auraient à souffrir les Chrétiens.

L'affaire de la descente de police chez le commerçant Lobyevitch, citée par M. le Consul-Général et dont la mission du Colonel Suleyman Bey aurait été la conséquence, se réduit aux faits suivants : Les détachements préposés à la poursuite des brigands qui de temps à autre viennent de la Croatie, à la recherche de l'un d'eux nommé Ustoya Courmanos, ont été informés, par plusieurs Chrétiens, qu'ils avaient conduit ce dernier et deux de ces complices chez le commerçant Bojo Loboyé de Gradiska. Une perquisition domiciliaire tardivement faite n'a pas amené la découverte des brigands. Sur les plaintes de Bojo, portées au chef-lieu du vilayet, le Colonel Suleyman Bey a été chargé de la mission de faire une enquête. Malgré les dénégations de ceux qui avaient d'abord informé l'autorité militaire, le fait a été constaté à la suite d'un interrogatoire, et ce résultat, confirmé plus tard amplement par une nouvelle enquête effectuée par le Vali en personne à son arrivée à Banjaluka. D'ailleurs, il est établi que presque tous les habitants

de Gradiska, sans en excepter même le curé, sont des recéleurs de brigands. Dans tout cela, le but caché des meneurs, qu'il est aisé de deviner est, de s'assurer une entière impunité, une large liberté d'agir, de faire croire que l'insécurité règne dans le vilayet, que l'autorité y est faible et sans prestige; en un mot, que le Gouvernement Impérial est impuissant à se faire obéir et à gouverner la Bosnie. Pour ce qui est du "mazbata," que le Colonel Suleyman Bey aurait essayé de faire signer pour témoigner de la satisfaction de la population en faveur de sa mission à Gradiska, cela est une pure invention. Un tel document n'a jamais existé, et ce n'est pas sur leur refus de le signer et à la suite des menaces du Caïmacam que les vingt-trois individus affiliés des comités se sont enfuis en Autriche-Hongrie; mais bien pour les motifs autrement sérieux et graves ci-dessus mentionnés en détails. Dès lors il devient évident dans quel but a été imaginé cette affaire de "mazbata," et sous quelle couleur on a essayé de présenter la fuite des perturbateurs.

M. le Consul-Général a enfin cité deux faits: l'assassinat de la femme d'un certain Hadji Ahmed, qu'il attribue erronément au beau-fils de ce dernier, et dont il a été fait mention plus haut; l'incident des portes brisées du Vice-Consulat et de la maison d'un certain Georges Tito et où des voleurs se seraient introduits. Cette nouvelle complètement mensongère a été inventée et propagée par Tito, signataire lui-même de l'acte d'association secrète du Comité de Banjaluka. Il n'y a eu ni portes brisées, ni traces d'effraction quoique toutes les présomptions soient pour la fausseté de la nouvelle, l'interrogatoire de Tito qui se poursuite ne tardera pas à faire également la lumière sur cette affaire.

Le résultat de l'enquête effectuée sur les plaintes des "Opechtinés" de Banjaluka et de Gradiska répond et au delà à toutes les assertions relevées dans les rapports du Consulat susmentionné. Néanmoins, il a été jugé nécessaire de faire justice séparément de toutes les allégations accumulées à la charge des Autorités Impériales et des populations Musulmanes de la Bosnie.

En exposant ici les détails qui précèdent, le Gouvernement Impérial n'entend nullement entreprendre une justification, d'ailleurs si facile. Il n'a eu en vue que de les présenter à une appréciation impartiale, et de prévenir toute méprise sur la nature et la portée de ce qu'on s'est plû à qualifier d'incidents de Banjaluka et de Gradiska.

Inclosure 2 in No. 6.

Consul Holmes to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Bosna-Serai, September* 28, 1873.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Excellency's despatch, marked Confidential, of August 28, stating that an impression appears to prevail in certain quarters that M. Theodorovitch, the Austro-Hungarian Consul-General here, is fomenting the discontent of the Slave population.

In reply, I beg to state that the authorities here have also this conviction, and complain bitterly of a recent change in the conduct of the Austrian Government and of all the Austrian functionaries in Bosnia in what relates to the affairs of this vilayet. This change, they say, dates from about the time of the arrival of M. Theodorovitch in the spring of last year. That gentleman was scarcely established in his post when, in July, he received a visit from M. de Kalay, the Austro-Hungarian Political Agent at Belgrade, who after a stay of some weeks here returned to his post after visiting various parts of the Province in company, I am told, with a known but unavowed agent of the Austrians in Bosnia. Soon afterwards M. Theodorovitch made a tour of about three weeks with the same individual, and also this spring he made another journey, visiting all the places where Austrian agents are established, again, I believe, accompanied by the same agent. All these journeys I know were viewed with suspicion by the authorities. They complain also that M. Theodorovitch, in bringing forward the exaggerated and often unfounded reports of his agents in Bosnia, will admit of no explanation, given after strict investigation, but insists on the infallibility of the information he receives; and they also state that it is impossible that he should not have been aware of the action of the Vice-Consul at Banjaluka in the late affair of the Christian merchants of Gradiska. This gentleman, M. Dragansich, who has been lately removed from his post, the Turkish authorities consider the direct promoter of the movement of the Christian merchants and their subsequent Memorial to the Emperor of Austria and the Ambassadors at Vienna, and they pretend that they have proofs of his action in the matter.

The conduct of this gentleman in writing the most incorrect reports of the state

the country, and the annoyance of successive Governor-Generals at his unwarrantable attempts to embroil the relations of Turks and Christians in his neighbourhood, have long since been known to me, and some years ago Sir H. Bulwer telegraphed to me to report on the truth of an account of the condition of Bosnia, sent to the Austrian Embassy by Colonel Jovanovic, the Austrian Consul-General here, founded on M. Dragansich's statements, which were grossly exaggerated.

The authorities here complain, with reason, that, not only the Austrian functionaries in Bosnia, but the whole of the Austrian population on the Save, do their best to promote disaffection in Bosnia. The Slave newspapers do the same. Our present Governor-General, who was a member of the Council of Ministers at Constantinople at the time, declares that the Austrian Government endeavoured to embroil the Porte in hostilities with Montenegro at the time of the incident at Kolaskin last October, and was nearly successful.

Lastly, the incident of the reception of the Princes of Servia and Roumania at the Austrian Court, in addition to the circumstances I have related, has confirmed the conviction that, for some reason or other, while always professing the utmost friendship, that Power is really endeavouring to annoy and embarrass the Turkish Government, and that this Province, being immediately within reach, naturally feels the consequence of this unfriendly disposition.

Thus the action of the Austrian functionaries in Bosnia is not so much attributed to their personal inclinations as the Government they serve and whose instructions they are supposed to obey.

I have, &c
(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

No. 7.

Sir H. Elliot to Earl Granville.—(Received October 28.)

(No. 362. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, October* 10, 1873.

WITH reference to my previous number of this date, I have to inform your Lordship that Raschid Pasha mentioned to me that the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires had expressed much dissatisfaction at the reflections upon the Austro-Hungarian Consular Agent in Bosnia, which appear in the Memorandum of the Porte on the affair of the Christians at Gradiska.

Raschid Pasha answered that, accusations having been brought against the Ottoman authorities, it had become necessary to show clearly who were really responsible for the present state of things, but the Memorandum of the Porte, although it had been printed on account of its length, was not intended for publication.

On the other hand, an article in the Pester "Lloyds" newspaper, which is looked upon here as an organ of Count Andrassy, in which the Ottoman Administration is commented upon in severe terms and the Turkish Empire is represented as perishing by internal corruption, is regarded as evidence of the ill-will borne towards Turkey by the present Vienna Cabinet.

I endeavoured to calm this irritation by assuring Raschid Pasha that the language of Count Andrassy to Sir Andrew Buchanan in no way confirmed this view of his feelings, as his Excellency seemed quite disposed to believe that the reports of the Consular Agents in Bosnia were exaggerated and over-coloured; that there could not, however, be much doubt that the Christian population had causes for complaint, and if these had come to the knowledge of the Vienna Cabinet, it was an act of friendliness, rather than the contrary, to put the Porte in possession of the information which had been communicated by the Consuls.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 8.

Sir H. Elliot to Earl Granville.—(Received November 6.)

(No. 387. Confidential.)

Therapia, October 28, 1873.

My Lord,

RASCHID PASHA has communicated to me, through Mr. Pisani, a copy of the note of the Austro-Hungarian Minister of the 28th of June, to which reference has been made in my despatch No. 386 of this day's date, but with the request that it might be considered as strictly confidential, inasmuch as the knowledge by the Austrian Government that it had been communicated to me might be productive of fresh difficulty.

I have accordingly the honour to transmit it confidentially to your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(For Sir Henry Elliot),

(Signed) SIDNEY LOCOCK.

Inclosure in No. 8.

Count Ludolf to Raschid Pasha.

Constantinople, le 28 Juin, 1873.

M. le Ministre,

DES faits d'une haute et regrettable gravité m'obligent de recourir de la manière la plus pressante à la sollicitude éclairée de votre Excellence, afin d'y remédier énergiquement et avec toute la promptitude nécessaire.

J'ai été déjà plusieurs fois dans le cas de signaler aux prédécesseurs de votre Excellence une certaine recrudescence de fanatisme qui s'est manifestée depuis quelque temps parmi la population Musulmane dans une partie de la Bosnie et qui se trahissait tantôt par des démonstrations contre l'usage des cloches et tantôt par des menaces, des actes de violence, et même des meurtres commis contre des Chrétiens. Malheureusement quelques uns des fonctionnaires de provinces, et notamment le Mutessarif de Banjaluka, Kiamil Bey, et le Caïmacam de Gradiska, Emin Effendi, soit par haine contre les Chrétiens, soit par une coupable faiblesse, ont non-seulement laissé s'empirer cet état de choses, mais ont prêté l'appui de leur autorité à des actes de persécution qu'on ne croyait plus possibles sous un Gouvernement aussi juste et humain comme celui de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan actuellement régnant.

Je me permettrai de signaler simplement quelques faits, et de laisser votre Excellence elle-même juge des conséquences qui seraient à craindre si on devait les laisser impunis.

C'est ordinairement sous le prétexte qu'ils recèlent des brigands que les Chrétiens en Bosnie sont soumis à des mauvais traitements de la part des organes de l'autorité locale, qui pénètrent dans les maisons, en maltraitant les habitants, les mettant en prison, et ne leur rendant la liberté qu'après leur avoir extorqué autant d'argent que possible.

Un de ces faits qui a eu lieu le 10 Janvier de l'année courante dans la maison du négociant Bazo Lubojevich à Gradiska, où il jouit de l'estime générale, est venue à la connaissance de la Sublime Porte, qui a envoyé un Commissaire spécial dans la personne de Miralai Suleyman Bey sur les lieux pour examiner le cas. On ignore la teneur du rapport que ce Commissaire a présenté à la Porte; mais à peine était-il parti que le Caïmacam a cru nécessaire de faire circuler parmi les Chrétiens, à l'aide de l'un de leur corréligionnaires, payé à cette fin, une déclaration dans laquelle on voulait leur faire exprimer leur complète satisfaction avec la conduite des autorités et leur reconnaissance de la sollicitude dont ils étaient l'objet. Quelques uns des Chrétiens indignés des mensonges qu'on voulait leur faire signer, ont détruit l'acte qui les contenait et dont l'auteur est un certain Ali Effendi, ci-devant Président du Tribunal de Commerce. Ce même Ali Effendi avec les nommés Tchim Effendi, Hadji Omer Feizli, et Hadji Mahmid, sont précisément les organisateurs des vexations contre les Chrétiens, et dominent ainsi que j'ai eu l'honneur de l'exposer par une note du 17 Décembre, 1872, de leur influence néfaste le Mutessarif de Banjaluka, Kiamil Bey, ainsi que le Caïmacam de Gradiska Emin Effendi. Ce dernier, lorsqu'il eut connaissance de la suppression de l'adresse de remerciements, envoya les Taptiehs pour faire arrêter les récalcitrants et menaça toute la commune Chrétienne de sa vengeance. Effrayés par ces menaces et les expériences déjà faites de l'impunité avec laquelle on pouvait les maltraiter, 24 parmi les habitants principaux de Gradiska crurent devoir se réfugier dans la nuit du 13 au 14 de ce mois sur le territoire Austro-Hongrois.

Un autre cas où lieu il y a environ un mois dans Wayar Vakouf. Un certain Hadji Ahmed Arnaout avait deux femmes, dont la plus jeune étant favorisée par lui se voyait l'objet de la haine et de la jalousie de l'autre. Cette dernière se conjura avec son fils Zarim pour tuer sa rivale dans l'absence de Hadji Ahmed; on l'engagea à se rendre dans un bois voisin pour y cueillir quelques herbes. C'est là que Zarim la surprit et la tua, mais pour mieux cacher son crime, lui et sa mère, aussitôt le meurtre accompli, se mirent à crier qu'ils avaient vu un Chrétien, du nom Ostaja Zuchora, qui a une cabane dans le bois, tuer la femme et s'enfuir.

Hadji Ahmid, auquel à son retour on avait raconté les faits dans ces termes, ameuta la population Musulmane de Wazar contre les Chrétiens, et le Caïmacam, Emin Effendi, qui n'est que trop porté à accueillir de pareilles accusations, en prit de suite prétexte pour faire mettre en prison les principaux négociants Chrétiens du nom de Boys Covic, Alexa Djebedzic, Fode Gosic, Risto Bodic, Waso Djebedzic, M. Drimir et Jandro Mutesias.

Fehim Effendi, dont j'ai déjà cité le nom plus haut, ordonna de son côté à son intendant (subachi) de tuer Ostoza Juchova, imputé d'avoir assassiné la femme Turque. L'intendant de Fehim Bey se rendit en effet dans la cabane de Zuchova, lui fit lier les mains et lui coupa la tête, qui fut apportée à Wazar.

A ces atrocités, qui peuvent paraitre invraisemblables, mais qui cependent ne sont que trop vraies, il faut ajouter aussi les plaintes qui s'élèvent contre l'insécurité générale. Après une tentative d'effraction faite quelques jours avant dans la maison du négociant Georges Zitta à Banjaluka, les voleurs pénètrent, dans la nuit du 12 Juin, aussi dans la maison du Vice-Consul d'Austro-Hongrie dans la dite ville. Heureusement on les apperçus à temps pour les mettre en fuite, avant qu'ils eûssent pu enlever quelque chose dans la localité où ils étaient déjà entrés et où ils auraient pu causer d'énormes dommages puisque les dépôts Consulaires dépassent plusieurs centaines de mille florins.

Toutes ces tristes nouvelles me sont parvenues hier et au moment où mon Gouvernement, ému par les mêmes informations, crut devoir me demander par télégramme si j'en avais déjà saisi la Sublime Porte. Je m'abstiens de tout commentaire, mais je demande à votre Excellence si la situation ne doit pas être bien grave et la confiance dans la justice des autorités bien ébranlée si vingt-quatre négociants d'un seul endroit ont cru devoir abandonner leurs familles et leur avoir pour chercher un réfuge sur le territoire étranger? Je me permets aussi de demander à votre Excellence si ces mêmes autorités ne doivent pas tristement négliger leurs devoirs pour que la témérité des voleurs puisse oser de pénétrer jusque dans la maison du Vice-Consul Impérial et Royal située seulement à quelques pas du consul.

Il s'agit donc dans ce cas du propre prestige de la Sublime Porte, de la perte des sympathies d'une grande portion de la population de la Bosnie, et qui suit de quels dangers plus graves encore, et on ne saurait par conséquence douter de l'urgence que les intérêts du Gouvernement Ottoman dans le Mutessarillik de Banjaluka fussent confiés sans retard à des organes qui méritent toute sa confiance.

Je dois pour ma part réclamer des soins bienveillants de votre Excellence des ordres télégraphiques afin que les mesures nécessaires soient prises pour sauvegarder l'avoir des négociants réfugiés sur le territoire Austro-Hongrois par ce qu'il est composé en majeure partie de marchandises qui leur sont confiées par des maisons Autrichiennes et prier votre Excellence de vouloir bien m'informer des dispositions qui seront adoptés pour que ces réfugiés puissent rentrer chez eux sans crainte d'être molestés ou persécutés. Je dois de plus m'adresser à ses soins afin que les autorités de Banjaluka soient rendues responsables par le télégraphe de la sécurité de l'habitation Consulaire, que je place ainsi sous la protection toute spéciale de la Sublime Porte.

En regrettant profondément d'avoir dû me faire l'organe d'une communication aussi fâcheuse, je me sens soulagé par la conviction que le Ministère dont votre Excellence fait partie saura mieux que tout autre apprécier la nécessité de pourvoir énergiquement à la répression d'un mal qui n'a pu prendre ces proportions que grâce au faux jour dont on couvrait la situation mais qui, une fois tirée à la lumière, trouvera la Sublime Porte décidée à faire prévaloir aussi dans cette partie de l'Empire les principes de l'humanité et d'une égale protection pour tous sans aucune distinction de race et de culte.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) LUDOLF.

No. 9.

Consul-General Longworth to Earl Granville.—(Received November 10.)

(No. 29. Political.)

Belgrade, November 2, 1873.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith inclosed to your Lordship extracts from the Austro-Hungarian journal "Obzor" of Agram, containing attacks on the Turkish Government and its functionaries in Bosnia. These are written in the most virulent spirit, and intended to convey the impression that the Turks are incorrigible barbarians whom it is incumbent on Austria to expel from the neighbouring Provinces. These accusations are chiefly founded on memorials presented to the Government and to Representatives of foreign Powers at Vienna, and to which the latter, declaring them to be much exaggerated, paid no attention.

The Servian Government have communicated to me reports from Agram, in which it is stated that these documents had been concocted at that place, where there has long been a Croatian propaganda to promote insurrection in Bosnia. Bearing this fact in mind, we have no difficulty in tracing the late intrigues to the right source. In this manner also, the squabbles that have arisen among the Austrian Consular officials and the discrepancies in their reports are fully accounted for.

There is reference also in this article to the collective letter of the Christians of Bania Luka and the Herzegovine addressed to the Prince of Montenegro, to which allusion is made in my despatch No. 16 of June 10 to Sir H. Elliot, inclosed in No. 13 of June 12 to Foreign Office, and the authenticity of which the writer of the article has now the assurance to deny. There are vouchers for it, nevertheless, not only in the hands of Aasim Pasha, but in those also (as I stated some months ago) of the Servian Government, and which, as an understanding between these different parties is out of the question, afford the strongest presumption of bad faith on the part of the Austro-Hungarian Government, or, at any rate, of its Agents, through whose instrumentality these intrigues have been carried on.

M. Theodorovitch, the Consul-General at Serajevo, who had been summoned from his post simultaneously with M. Dragantchitch from Bania Louka, appears now to have been permitted to return. His proceedings there, however, have been very unfavourably criticized by the Belgrade press, whose strictures have been more than confirmed by that of Agram.

I transmit inclosed to your Lordship further extracts on the subject from the "Obzor," in which that functionary is treated with little ceremony, it having been his task, a most odious one apparently, to defend the Bosniac Mussulmans accused of atrocities towards the Christians. I cannot, of course, at this distance from the scene of these disgraceful proceedings, pretend to decide on the merits or demerits of the parties inculpated, but the impression left on the mind by the conflicting statements we have received here is one of painful surprise at the conduct of the Austro-Hungarian functionaries. I can at present say nothing positive as to the existing relations of the Consul-General with Mustapha Assim Pasha, the Governor-General, but the lady so unceremoniously alluded to in the Croatian papers has not accompanied her husband on his return to his post

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. A. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 1 in No. 9.

Extract from "L'Obzor" of October 8, 1873.

[" L'Obzor," dans son No. 231 du 8 Octobre, publie un long article sur le rapport de Moustafa Assim Pacha, dont nous extrayons les passages suivants :—]

L'ARTICLE parle d'abord " de l'incapacité du Gouvernement Turc de se développer sur les principes de la civilisation moderne ; par contre il ne fait que se plonger avec une raffinerie plus grande (c'est tout ce qu'il a gagné de la civilisation) dans son ancien barbarisme ; des nombreux exemples, et principalement les récentes épisodes en Bosnie, nous en fournissent la preuve. L'Europe ne doit plus songer à améliorer la Turquie, car l'impossibilité fut demontrée, mais à l'éloigner de l'Europe, comme étant le premier obstacle au progrès de la civilisation en Orient.

" La Turquie a foulé aux pieds les droits les plus sacrés de l'humanité ; elle va jusqu'à enfreindre les dispositions du Traité de Paris garanties par toutes les grandes Puissances. Les émigrés de la Bosnie ont fait connaître ces abus de la Porte aux Puissances garantes. On dit qu'à la suite ces Puissances ont fait des remontrances à Constantinople. Et comment a-t-il répondu le Gouvernement Turc à ces remontrances ? Il a répondu par un nouveau mépris, par un nouveau forfait, en faisant jeter dans les cachots le reste de ces honnêtes marchands de Bribir et de Banjalouka qui avaient échappé à la première capture d'Assim Pacha. Il résulte que la vie, l'honneur, et la fortune privée des sujets Chrétiens de la Porte, garantis par le Traité de Paris, sont mis en question. Et quand le Consul Austro-Hongrois de Banjalouka est allé officiellement interpeller Assim Pacha de la cause qui a provoqué une conduite inhumaine de sa part, comment lui a-t-il répondu ce représentant de la Sublime Porte ?

" Par la plus laide des offenses qu'on puisse jamais faire au représentant d'une grande Puissance. Après l'avoir fait attendre une longue heure dans l'antichambre il partit en voiture sans même se faire voire du Consul. Sans doute il a compris de suite la portée d'une pareille offense, car il s'empressa immédiatement de se tirer de cette impasse par la ruse. Il appela son satellite Ekmitch et lui dit de faire écrire par Lionbisitch de Gradiska Turque (le même qui écrivit les plaintes des émigrés pour Serajevo et Constantinople) une mémoire au nom des Bosniaes à l'adresse du Prince de Montenegro. Dans cette lettre on se plaint des persécutions d'Assim Pacha (bien entendu dans des termes modérés), et on laisse entendre que le Consul Autrichien Dragantchitch poussait les Chrétiens à la révolte et les compromis à la fuite. Voilà la conduite d'Assim Pacha. Je garde dans ma poche la lettre en original d'Ekmitch au nom du Pacha adressée à Lionbisitch, et je suit prêt de la produire devant les tribunaux, si la nécessité se montre. En voici pourtant la copie. . . ."

Dans une correspondance de la Bosnie, en date du 27 Septembre, No. 322 du même journal, il est dit :—

" La main et le cœur me tremblent en vous écrivant ces lignes, et je n'y suis poussé que par le comble de nos souffrances et par la nouvelle que j'apprends sur le compte des représentants de vôtre Gouvernement et du monsieur dirigé de s'enquérir de nos souffrances actuelles, le Consul-Général M. Théodorovitch. Ce monsieur s'est exprimé d'être horriblement faché par ce que les Chrétiens ne lui font pas des plaintes au sujet des violences des Turcs, et en conséquent il devient ridicule auprès de son Gouvernement, n'ayant quoi à lui rapporter, tandis que son Gouvernement plaide injustement leur cause auprès des grandes Puissances. M. Théodorovitch a-t-il pû dire cela quand je sais pertivemment que tels et tels lui ont fait des plaintes et quand sans cela il y a tant de faits qui sont capables à justifier lui et son Gouvernement."

Suit une longue commentaire des violences exercées par les Turcs et leur Gouvernement contre les Chrétiens, toujours avec ce refrain : Est ce que M. Théodorovitch ne connait pas cela ?

Inclosure 2 in No. 9.

Extract from "L'Obzor" of October 10, 1873.

[" L'Obzor," dans son No. 233, du 10 Octobre, publie un article sur l'état de la Bosnie, dans lequel il énumère une serie d'actes d'abus et de violences que les Turcs exercent impunément envers les Chrétiens et dont nous extrayons quelques citations les plus saillantes :—]

" TOUT ce que les malheureux raias emigrés de la Bosnie ont exposé dans la mémoire présenté à Sa Majesté l'Empereur d'Autriche-Hongrie n'est que bien faible en comparaison des souffrances, des tourments, de frayeur, de deuil, de douleur, &c., que nous (Bosniaques) supportons des Turcs ; nous venons aux faits.

" Le premier Dimanche de Carême, 1868, Adem Mésaghitch, Turc d'Ohodiniza, à deux heures de Touzla, tua, du fusil, Ilia Dioulabitch, Catholique. Tout le village eut connaissance de ce fait et il fut porté devant les tribunaux. Mais quelle en fut sa décision ? Le Catholique ne pouvant avoir un Turc garant, et sans celui-là les tribunaux n'admettant pas un Catholique à intenter un procès aux Turcs (Loi du Koran) Adême fut absous.

" Une année plus tard Satchir Ouzemoritch et Asim Betchirovitch, parents du même Adême Mesaghitch, tuèrent le fils Pierre du susdit Ilia Dioulabitch, et cela de la manière

la plus atroce lui coupèrent les talons. Ils le tuèrent par vengeance, parce que Adème Mesaghitch avait dû subir une courte reclusion, après l'assassinat, tant que la question du garant fut tirée au clair. Les paysans qui avaient entendu les cris de la victime accoururent et trouvèrent encore le couteau Ture enfoncé dans le jeune homme mourant, qui, en effet, put à peine dire les noms des meurtriers et expira. Les paysans dénoncèrent ce fait au Tribunal et y déposèrent le couteau. Le Tribunal arrêta, en effet, les assassins, mais ils les lâcha après quelques jours, parce qu'il n'y avait pas de témoin Ture qui confirma l'assassinat, le témoignage des Chrétiens n'ayant pas de valeur devant les Tribunaux contre un Ture.

"En 1869 Mio Boutchniok, Ture de Touzla, tua à Solini dans le han (hôtel) d'Osman, Rekitch Malitch Douspère de Sandriska, district de Kisotchko. Il y avait comme témoins quelques dix Chrétiens, Catholiques et orthodoxes, qui portèrent la plainte aux Tribunaux. Que firent les Tures? Ils corrompirent un rénégat Allemand, médecin de profession qui, malgré l'évidence, déclara l'homme mort d'apoplexie. Le médecin s'appelle Abdoulah Effendic. Mio, en conséquent, fut déclaré innocent.

"La même année, le 5 Décembre, les Tures Osman Daritch et son fils Bricho, fracassèrent la tête à Etienne Ilitch-Djinitch de Liepounitza, car celui-ci voulut empêcher qu'on lui coupa certains pommiers. Voulant devancer les Chrétiens au Tribunal, sachant bien que rien que par le fait de premier plaignant ils gagneront la cause, laissant la victime encore mourante, y allèrent deposer faussement leurs plaintes, faisant voire qu'Etienne a été l'agresseur. Le Tribunal ne s'inquiète guère de dilucider la vérité, mais après quelques jours Etienne étant mort, ils firent emprisonner son frère. La même année, 18 Décembre, Veïso Mouritch, du village de Matitch, près de Touzla, tua avec une hâche Ivo Tchanitch, parceque quelques porcs de celui-ci étaient entrés dans le champs, non-ensemencés, mais vides de Veïso. Le 2 Février, 1871, Iliaz Howatovitch, Ture, du village de Soukovatz, tua d'un coup de fusil Stiépan Tomitch dans son moulin, près du village de Bakvitch, et ceci par instigation du Bregne Siotchitch, surnommé Sali-Bregne.

"Avant neuf mois, Kerk, Serdar de Serajévo, emmena neuf personnes de la Passavine, cinq Orthodoxes et quatre Catholiques, sous prétexte qu'ils sont des haïdouks, organisés en bande (neuf haïdouks qui se laisseraient prendre par un Serdar!!!) Enfin Kerk les emmena devant le Tribunal de Touzla. Ces hommes sont, en effet, innocents, mais ils ont le malheur d'être riches, et voilà pourquoi ils sont mis sous jugement, car le Ture veut des ducats, et, en effet, voilà le Tribunal qui traite maintenant avec eux pour les laisser libres moyennant une rançon.

"Tels sont les bienfaits du Hatti-humaïouni. Et pourtant tous ces faits se passent dans les environs de Touzla seulement, dans la triste Bosnie, malgré l'éloge qu'en fait l'Europe. Les cris et les souffrances des raïas vont bien loin, mais personne ne s'en inquiète; ni l'Autriche qui s'appelle la protectrice du Christianisme, ni la Russie qui fait parade d'être la protectrice et la mère des Slaves, ni la Serbie qui se dit être l'espérance de tous les Serbes et leur Piémont; ni l'Europe entière, qui a pris pour mentente devise: 'Liberté, Progrès, et Humanité.' Malheur aux raïas tant qu'ils restent sous les Tures, et il ne s'en délivreront tant qu'ils ne se ressondent eux-mêmes à conquérir leur liberté. Plus tard il s'y décideront, ils leur sera plus difficile de s'en délivrer."

Ce même journal, dans son No. 236, du 14 Octobre, publie des mémoires et des correspondances très longues sur les affaires de Bosnie, dont nous extrayons les passages suivantes:—

"(Correspondance de Stara Gradiska.)—Le Vali Asim Pacha et l'Evêque Païsie sont encore à Banjalouka, et font tout leur possible pour induire les Chrétiens, par tous les moyens coërcitifs de révoquer leur plainte contre la violence Turque, et de jeter toute la faute sur le ci-devant Vice-Consul Austro-Hongrois, M. Dragantchitch. C'est à dire, on les oblige à souscrire à un papier dans lequel il est dit que c'est Dragantchitch qui les a poussés à se plaindre des violences Turques, que c'est lui-même qui a écrit la plainte et les persuadait à la souscrire. Le dalop (machine de torture) a fait déjà sa part dans la contrainte de cette révocation. La peur a pris de telles proportions parmi les Chrétiens qu'il sera facile de faire d'eux tout ce que l'on veut. En attendant, les Tures mêmes, et les officiers Osmanlis en Bosnie n'approuvent pas la tyrannie d'Asim Pacha, et ils disent que eux-mêmes seraient prêts à dire toute la vérité devant une Commission, qui viendrait de Constantinople, et dévoilerait la tyrannie d'Assim Pacha.

"Le Consul-Général d'Austro-Hongrie, M. Théodorovitch, n'a été à Banjalouka, et ne s'est mêlé dans toute cette affaire que pour comble de malheur pour les Chrétiens. C'est lui qui a persuadé aux Chrétiens d'écrire leur plainte contre les violences Turques, et

de les remettre au Pacha Assim. Les Chrétiens, confiant dans son concours, firent comme il leur avait conseillé, et maintenant les voilà livrés à toutes sortes de souffrances, tandis que Théodorovitch s'est sauvé secrètement sans dire un mot en leur faveur. Et quelle ne pourraient-elle être l'influence de Théodorovitch, lorsque Assim a pu faire parade que Madame Théodorovitch apprenait à danser au vieux Assim dans ses soirées? Voilà qui est bien flétrissant selon nos mœurs, et selon nos idées, pour cette maitresse de danse."

Ce même journal publie, dans son No. 228 du 4 Octobre, un article contre la politique et la presse Russe, dont nous extrayons ce qui suit:—

"Certains journaux Russes voient de mauvais œil l'arrangement qu'a conclu la Croatie avec la Hongroie et la Monarchie. Ces journaux Russes parlent de la Monarchie Austro-Hongroise comme si elle s'est écraulée, comme si elle n'existait plus. Et en attendant l'Empereur de Russie, Roi Victor Emanuel, et l'Empereur Guillaume, apprécient sa puissance par leur visite à Vienne. Nous ne refutons pas les appréciations Russes, du jour quand Beust et Andrassy arrivèrent au pouvoir. Mais quel que soit la valeur morale de la parenti du puissant peuple Russe avec les Croates, les criailleries des journaux Russes n'ont pu ni empêcher ni attenuer les souffrances de ce pays. Il est injuste par conséquent quand les journaux Russes exigent de la Croatie de soutenir une guerre que la puissante Russie n'a ni la force ni le courage d'entreprendre elle-même, savoir pas même d'y contribuer par d'autres moyens que par des cris inutiles de certains journaux. Les journaux Russes ont maintesfois peints les dangers qui résultent de l'instabilité de l'amitié de Bismarck. Son avidité pour l'hégémonie Européenne, ses intrigues dans les provinces de la Baltique, sa campagne en Orient ménace aussi bien la Russie que l'Austro-Hongrie et les races Slaves. Espère-t-on en Russie de pouvoir partager le butin dont il (Bismarck) en est si avide? Que l'on se garde bien, car ce pourrait bien s'attendre aux déceptions de Rechberg et de Napoléon.

"Peut-être, dans ces conditions, la Russie ferait bien de conclure elle-même une amitié sincère avec l'Austro-Hongrie et favoriser, par cette amitié, l'accord des races Slaves avec la Monarchie, pour les retirer ainsi des griffes de Bismarck, qui s'acharne à faire durer ce désaccord pour en faire son butin. Pour ce qui est des peuples Slaves de la presqu'île des Balkens, l'antagonisme entre l'Autriche et la Hongrie leur est autant nuisible qu'à nous. Le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de notre Monarchie fait publier qu'elle favorisera volontiers le développement de leur liberté et de leur bien-être matériel. Que le Prince Gortchakow le prend en parole si vraiment il tient à la liberté de ces peuples, et qu'il fassent cause commune avec elle; que tous les deux renoncent aux conquêtes en Orient, et alors ils parviendront facilement à être amis et alliés.

"Nous ne comprenons autrement la politique Russe que si elle est favorable aux Slaves de l'Autriche et de la Turquie, ou bien si elle déclare la guerre à l'Autriche. Tout autre politique n'a aucune valeur pour nous, tout autre expédient ne ferait qu'augmenter nos souffrances et nos misères, sans aucune espérance d'un bon résultat."

No. 10.

Consul-General Eldridge to Earl Granville.—(Received November 19.)

(No. 30. Political.)

Beyrout, November 1, 1873.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 29, Political, of the 19th September, I have the honour to transmit herewith the copy of a further despatch and its inclosures which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Sublime Porte, on the subject of the Ansairiyeh converts of Lattakia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIEGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 10.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir H. Elliot.

Aleih, October 27, 1873.

Sir,

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Excellency's despatch of the 13th instant, informing me of the steps you have taken with regard to the three Ansairiyeh

converts and the disregard to the principles of toleration which has of late been evinced by the authorities of Lattakia.

In accordance with the instructions of your Excellency, I have acquainted the Rev. Dr. Martin with the tenor of your despatch. For your further information I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch and its inclosures which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Green on the subject of the three converts.

I quite share the opinion of Halet Pasha that it is most undesirable that the non-Christian subjects of His Majesty the Sultan should be encouraged to make a hollow profession of Christianity with a view of evading their duties towards the State. I have frequently impressed my views in this sense upon over zealous missionaries, and have always refused to interfere in similar matters unless fully convinced of the sincerity of the conversions, as I am in the present instance, the young men in question having been brought up in the mission schools from childhood, have never known any other religion than the Protestant form of Christianity, and have always been known as professors of it, therefore I consider that they are entitled to the same privileges as other Christian subjects of the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 10.

Vice-Consul Green to Consul-General Eldridge.

Sir, *Damascus, October* 12, 1873.

WITH reference to your despatch of the 19th ultimo, directing me to watch over the fate of the three Ansairiyeh converts to Christianity who have been impressed into the Turkish army, and if possible to obtain their liberation, I have the honour to transmit herewith for your information copies of two Reports addressed to me by Mr. Selim Meshaka, one of the Dragomans of this office.

Yesterday I had the honour to urge the case of the conscripts upon the attention of the Vali, his Excellency said he wished to tell me frankly that the question involved in this affair was a most important one for the Turkish Empire. The Ansairiyeh although pagans have hitherto been obliged to furnish their proper share of recruits to the army, and if it admitted that those of them who embrace Christianity are to be exempted from military service the whole tribe would quickly profess the Christian faith, and thus withdraw itself from an irksome duty. Halet Pacha said that a similar case had arisen in Tripoli of Barbary, where a heathen population called Kroom suddenly claimed to have avoided the obligation of military service by having become Christians, the Turkish Government, however, notwithstanding the alleged change of religion, insisted upon obtaining from it the usual number of conscripts.

The Governor-General also said that he was of opinion that his Government should exercise considerable firmness on this subject, as during the late visit of the United States Consul-General the latter had alluded to his Excellency to the right of such Ansairiyeh as should become Christians to be placed on the same footing as others of the same creed.

I admitted that I thought his Excellency was perhaps right in insisting upon the liability of the Ansairiyeh, under all circumstances, to military service, but I pointed out that the case of the present conscripts was such as to permit of an exception being made in their favour. There could be no doubt that these men were *bond fide* Christians; they had been long accepted as such by the authorities who had levied upon them the "haratch;" they had never placed themselves beyond the reach of those authorities, and they had been left unmolested and unclaimed until they had considerably passed the age when men first become liable to the conscription; indeed, I added, I feared that there was some truth in the assertion that the unfortunate men were being made to suffer for the ill feeling that had arisen between certain of the local and foreign functionaries at Lattakia.

The Governor-General said that he had been in active correspondence on the subject with the United States Consul-General, and he had referred to the Porte for instructions. Until these arrived he could take no action in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 3 in No. 10.

Report by Mr. Selim Meshaka, Dragoman of Her Majesty's Vice-Consulate at Damascus.

IN compliance with the instructions of Her Majesty's Vice-Consul, I called yesterday on the Acting Mushir, Kashif Pasha, who is also Acting Raïs Pasha, and brought under his notice the case of the three Ansairiyeh converts who have been impressed into the Turkish army. I urged his Excellency most strongly to liberate the men. His Excellency summoned the Miralaïs Bakir Bek and Hakmek Bek, the Kaïmakam Ahmed Bek, and the Mushir's interpreter Sadek Effendi, and imparted to them the object of my visit. The two Miralaïs said that Her Majesty's Vice-Consul should treat the matter through the Vali, and Bakir Bek said to me: "Even if Christians wanted to be soldiers, we would not accept them," and Hakmek Bek approved of this statement. I answered that I had not come to discuss with them the question whether they should accept Christians as soldiers or not, but to ask for the liberation of three Christians who had been pressed into the army against their will.

The Acting Mushir directed me to present his salams to the Vice-Consul and tell him that he must write to the Vali on this subject, who would communicate with him (the Acting Mushir); until then he could not take the matter under his consideration.

I have seen one of the Ansairiyeh in question at the Midan barracks. I went to see him, as I had received a note from him calling upon me to assist him as a fellow Christian and a Protestant. I was unable to see him, except in the presence of a certain officer named Osman Effendi, who came with the conscripts from Lattakia. The Ansairiyeh told me his health was suffering and that he earnestly prayed to be delivered from his present position.

(Signed) SELIM MESHAKA.

Damascus, September 26, 1873.

Inclosure 4 in No. 10.

Report by Mr. Selim Meshaka, Dragoman of Her Majesty's Vice-Consulate at Damascus.

I HAVE on several occasions seen two of the Ansairiyeh Christian conscripts. The third, being quartered out of town at the Merja barracks, I have not seen. They appear to have been treated better since their arrival in Damascus, and Selim Khalifi, the conscript at the Meidan barracks, tells me he has observed a marked improvement in his position since I called on him. I understand the conscripts are called upon to join in the daily Moslem prayers, and have been threatened to be beaten on stating that they are Christians. They have also been informed that if they persist in their profession they will probably be sent to Yemen.

(Signed) SELIM MESHAKA.

Damascus, October 8, 1873.

No. 11.

Consul-General Eldridge to Earl Granville.—(Received November 19.)

(No. 31. Political.)
My Lord, *Beyrout, November* 1, 1873.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the copy of a despatch and its inclosure, which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, on the subject of an expedition recently undertaken by the Turkish Government against the Ansairiyehs in the district of Lattakia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 11.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Aleih, October* 31, 1873.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Vitali, reporting the results of an expedition recently undertaken against the Ansairiyehs in the district of Lattakia.

The only successful expedition against these mountaineers was that undertaken by his Excellency Rashid Pasha in 1870, and I think the Ottoman Government would do far better by organizing an expedition on a larger scale and subduing the whole country, which should afterwards be occupied by troops and a regular administration established, than by these periodical raids, that only tend to render the state of brigandage permanent, as the inhabitants, seeing their homes destroyed and their property pillaged, will naturally take to highway robbery as their only means of subsistence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 11.

Vice-Consul Vitali to Consul-General Eldridge.

M. le Consul-Général, *Lattaquié, le 25 Octobre,* 1873.

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que le 30 Août dernier Hakki Pacha, Mutesarrif de Tripoli, est arrivé à Gébelé avec un bataillon d'infanterie par un bâtiment de l'Etat "l'Arcadia," ayant pour mission d'aviser au meilleur moyen de rétablir l'ordre dans ce district, les deux Caïmacamliks de Lattaquié et de Gébelé.

Après y avoir passé quelques jours, le susdit Mutesarrif est reparti pour Tripoli, laissant le Caïmacam de Lattaquié Salih Effendi, commissaire chargé du rétablissement de l'ordre dans tout le district avec titre de "Mamour-Islahat."

Les forces dont disposait Salih Effendi se composaient du bataillon en question et de quelques 200 cavaliers, sous le commandement du Colonel Ferid Bey, qui a choisi le village Merj-Méerbat, sis aux confins des deux Caïmacamliks, pour camper ces troupes.

Tout le mois de Septembre s'est écoulé sans que l'on ait ici rien appris de positif à l'égard de cette entreprise qui intéresse toute la population, sauf quelques nouvelles évasives; tel que l'intimation faite aux Chefs et notables de toute la montagne de se rendre au camp et le refus de la plupart parmi eux; et les sollicitations de quelques uns parmi eux pour avoir l'aman-ouraij (une espèce de sauf conduit) afin de s'y rendre.

Enfin le 10 de ce mois Salih Effendi et le Colonel Ferid Bey ont attaqué Eléoussra, un canton de la partie de la montagne qui dépend de Gébelé, et fuyardes rebelles, et bandits des Ansairiyehs; mais comme les habitants n'ont fait aucune résistence, et ayant pris la fuite dès l'apparition des troupes, celles-ci se sont facilement emparées de leurs villages, qu'elles ont livrés aux flammes après avoir saccagé le peu que les habitants avaient laissé.

Pendant leur fuite, les dits habitants d'Eléoussra ont rencontré environ 350 à 400 hommes des Ansairiyehs des autres cantons qui sont en inimitié avec eux et qui avaient ordre d'embusquer ainsi dans leur chemin avec lesquels ils ont échangé quelques coups de fusils.

En outre, tous les villages des autres cantons dont les habitants fuyaient lors du passage des troupes ont été également saccagés et incendiés, et quelques Chefs du Canton Elkardaka ont été arrêtés au camp comme prisonniers. Deux voleurs sont aussi tombés prisonniers.

Ceci fait, Ferid Bey est parti pour Hama avec la cavalerie, et Salih Effendi rentra le 20 de ce mois à Lattaquié avec le bataillon d'infanterie qui a reçu l'ordre d'hiverner en cette ville.

L'on assure que ce n'est qu'à cause du froid de la montagne qu'on a dû retirer les troupes ainsi, contrairement à toute supposition; mais, quoi qu'il en soit, toute la population regrette beaucoup que le Gouvernement ait limité ainsi son action, laissant dans l'impunité bon nombre de malfaiteurs et ne faisant rien pour assurer un meilleur avenir.

Cependant chacune des villes de Lattaquié et Gébelé a fait une pétition de remercîments au Gouvernement, et l'on y a beaucoup loué le Caïmacam Salih Effendi et le Colonel Férid Bey de tout ce qu'ils ont fait.

Je profite, &c.
(Signé) N. VITALI.

No. 12.

Vice-Consul Green to Earl Granville.—(Received November 24.)

(No. 38.)
My Lord, *Damascus, November* 11, 1873.

AS I have reason to believe publicity will be given through the English press to the case of the three Ansairiyeh converts to Christianity who have been enrolled into the Turkish army, I venture to submit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a letter that has been addressed to me on the subject by the Protestant (Presbyterian) missionaries residing in Damascus.

I have no doubt Mr. Eldridge has already placed before your Lordship the steps taken by me on behalf of those converts, and which have been so far successful as to relieve them, for the moment, from all pressure on the part of their officers with regard to their religion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 12.

The Revs. J. Crawford, W. Wright, and J. F. Patterson to Vice-Consul Green.

Dear Sir, *Damascus, November* 6, 1873.

WE, the undersigned missionaries at Damascus, beg to urge upon you to do your utmost for the release of the three Christian converts that are being now treated cruelly and illegally in Damascus to make them renounce Christianity.

As long as there was a possibility of their case being represented as a question of the introduction of Christians into the army, we did not feel called upon to make any representation to you on their behalf; but as we heard yesterday that one of them, Salim Khalify, had been beaten and was being starved to make him conform to the practices of the Moslem religion, we felt it our duty to lay the case before you.

We thank you for communicating immediately with the Commander-in-chief; and inasmuch as he ignored the presence of Christians in the army, and declared that all who were in the army must comport themselves as Moslems, thus showing that these men are not introduced into the army as Christians, we would respectfully call your attention to the sacred obligations of Turkey to respect the religious beliefs of all her subjects, and to the grave infringement of those obligations. The Imperial Firman of 21st February, 1856, known as the Hatti-Sherif, contains these words:—"Vu que tous les cultes sont et seront librement pratiqués dans mes Etats, aucun sujet de mon Empire ne sera gêné dans l'exercice de la religion qu'il professe, et ne pourra être contraint à changer de religion."

That this was meant to secure complete freedom to all converts is clear from the accompanying letter of Fuad Pasha to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, entitled "Declaration of the Porte on the freedom of religious opinions, and the impunity of renegades." In his letter Fuad Pasha says:—"In accordance with the friendly representations of her allies, and in accordance with the spirit of the age, the Porte hastens by Imperial Firman to communicate the decision adopted regarding the impunity of renegades. In consequence, the assurances formerly given to the British and French Governments ('Hatti Humayoun de Gulhané, 1839') with reference to the question of renegades, are at present renewed and confirmed afresh, while an additional assurance is declared and made known that the terms of the decision at that time adopted will be held to comprise absolutely all converts." No language can be clearer than that of the Firman, and the letter which accompanied it. And the Prime Minister of England, Mr. Gladstone, in speaking of the Hatti-Humayoun in the House of Commons, as reported in the "Mail" of 15th February, 1867, said:—"We are entitled to require from Turkey the execution of her literal engagements." The fanatical persecution of these three men is thus as illegal as it is cruel, and hoping you will "require from Turkey" in this matter "the execution of her literal engagements," we are, &c.

(Signed) JOHN CRAWFORD.
WILLIAM WRIGHT, B.A.
J. F. PATTERSON.

No. 13.

Memorandum of Verbal Communication made by the Chevalier Cadorna to Lord Tenterden, November 24, 1873.

Arrêt de jeunes hommes Mirdites par le Pacha Gouverneur de l'Albanie.—Le Consul de Sa Majesté le Roi d'Italie à Scutari d'Albanie a porté à la connaissance du Ministère Royal des Affaires Etrangères le fait suivant, qui aura certainement attiré aussi l'attention du Consul de Sa Majesté Britannique, savoir que le Gouverneur de l'Albanie, Chevldet Pacha, intollérant des privilèges dont jouissent *ab antiquo* les Mirdites, et désireux d'ôter à ces populations Chrétiennes tout élément de vie leur propre, commettait le 9 du mois d'Octobre dernier à leur préjugé un acte qu'il conviendrait peut-être relever.

Quarante jeunes gens appartenant à des familles distinguées de la Mirditie auraient été induits par le Gouverneur de Scutari à se rendre à Scutari, et lorsqu'ils se sont rendus près de lui, le Gouverneur les fit désarmer et renfermer dans la fortresse. Pour arriver à un tel résultat, il paraît que le Gouverneur se servit de deux jeunes gens de la famille du Capitaine Doda, cousins au défunt Bib-Doda, autrefois Prince de la Mirditie, et dont le fils se trouve à Constantinople, où le Gouvernement Ottoman le fit conduire en 1868, après la mort du père, pour qu'il y finit ses études. Il leur aurait fait comprendre qu'il était son intention de remplacer le Lieutenant de la Mirditie, le Turc Haydar-Belek, par une autre personne plus agréée aux populations, ainsi que de créer une petite troupe de soldats choisis parmi les personnes plus notoires du district, et que pour cela il lui était préalablement nécessaire qu'ils se réunissent ensemble et vinssent se présenter à lui.

Quel que puisse être le développement ultérieur de l'épisode sus-énoncé, il n'y a point de doute qu'un tel fait est de nature à provoquer une juste commotion parmi les populations Chrétiennes de l'Albanie.

La Sublime Porte devra certainement, dans son propre intérêt, prendre en dû examen la conduite de son Gouverneur, et voir si elle a été conforme aux principes que le Gouvernement Turc est tenu à suivre depuis qu'il a été admis à compter parmi les Etats Européens.

En attendant le Gouvernement Italien désirerait connaître si le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique ait reçu des informations semblables à celles sus-énoncées sur l'incident en question, et s'il juge utile et opportun de faire à Constantinople des remontrances sur la conduite du Gouverneur de Scutari.

No. 14.

Memorandum by Mr. Patterson.—(Communicated to Earl Granville by Mr. John Bright, December 3, 1873.)

AT B'hamra, district of Sevely, near Lattakia, Syria, the Governor, with a company of soldiers, who said he had orders from the Governor-General of Syria, seized three teachers in the Christian mission schools to become soldiers, viz., Eusaf Ledad, Hanna Mahkloof, and Salem Khalopy, they beat them, and tried to make them renounce their faith, but they said they might beat the flesh from their bones, and put them in the canon's mouth, and yet they would never change their faith. They were taken to Tebbaly with their hands tied behind their backs and put in the murderer's cell, and intend to send them off from there. These men are heads of families.

These three teachers are under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Beattie and Rev. H. Earson, who, with their wives and Miss Dodds, constiute the mission of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, and are United States' citizens, but are earnestly desirous of obtaining the good offices of the Consul and Vice-Consul of Great Britain upon behalf of their native co-religionists. These men have for years been employed in this Christian work undisturbed under a friendly Governor, who has recently been replaced by one of a very different character.

The kindly interference of Her Majesty's Government on behalf of these Christians would be highly appreciated by many people in this country as well as many in the United States of America, and there is little doubt such would be effectual for the purpose.

The within is a condensed summary of detailed information which has been received by friends in Liverpool in interesting letters from the afflicted missionaries in Syria; the letters are now before me, and may, in my judgment, be entirely relied upon.

Rev. Dr. Dodds, who founded the mission nearly twenty years since, and died there nearly two years ago, was a man of learning and discretion. His early colleague, Rev. Mr. Beattie, and his daughter, Miss Dodds, carry out his ideas.

(Signed) JOHN PATTERSON, J.P.

Liverpool, October 4, 1873.

No. 15.

Consul-General Eldridge to Earl Granville.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 82. Political.)

Beyrout, November 19, 1873.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the copy of a despatch and its inclosures, which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, respecting the three Ansairiyeh converts alluded to in my despatch No. 80, Political, of the 1st instant.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 15.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir H. Elliot.

Beyrout, November 17, 1873.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to report that, on the 5th instant, Mr. Vice-Consul Green reported to me that Salim Khalifé, one of the Ansairiyeh converts, complained that he had been ill-treated, ordered to be imprisoned, and kept without food, in order to force him to observe Ramazan.

On the 6th instant Mr. Green furnished me with another report of which I have the honour to forward a copy; upon its receipt on the 8th instant, I forwarded to your Excellency the following telegram:—"Reference my despatch No. 60. Green reports that Ansairiyehs are ill-used and coerced to become Mussulmans."

On the 9th instant Mr. Green again reported on this subject, I transmit copy of his despatch, from which it would appear that his Excellency the Wali takes a more liberal view of the matter than his military colleague, and I hope he will shortly receive orders from Constantinople to the effect that the principle of liberty of conscience is to be fully recognized in Syria.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 15.

Vice-Consul Green to Consul-General Eldridge.

Damascus, November 6, 1873.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of yesterday's date, I have the honour to state that I last night called on the Commander-in-chief Izzet Pasha, and represented to him that I last night called on the Commander-in-chief Izzet Pasha, and represented to him that I had ascertained that Selim Khalifeh, one of the Christian Ansairiyeh conscripts, was being ill-treated and punished by his officers because he had refused to become a Mohammedan. His Excellency said that I was labouring under some mistake, as there are no Christians in the Turkish army, and that its soldiers being Moslems, have to behave as such. Khalifeh's punishment was probably connected with the infringement by him of some military regulation.

As the question whether these conscripts are Christians or not has already been referred to Constantinople, I confined myself to reminding Izzet Pasha that very stringent Firmans and Treaty Stipulations exist as to the free exercise of religious convictions in Turkey, and suggested that he should institute further inquiries concerning the faith of the conscripts in question.

It is evident that unless speedy and efficacious representations are made to the Porte on behalf of these recruits, they will be shortly coerced into becoming Mussulmans.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 3 in No. 15.

Vice-Consul Green to Consul-General Eldridge.

Sir, *Damascus, November* 9, 1873.

ON the 6th instant, having been met by one of Izzet Pasha's Aides-de-camp, who delivered to me rather an unintelligible message about the three Ansairiyeh recruits, I thought it well to call again on Izzet Pasha under the hope that he might have modified his view as to their being Mohammedans, but his Excellency repeated to me his answer of the previous day.

As, however, Izzet Pasha added that he had nothing to do with the enrolment of soldiers, which is a duty of the civil authorities, I yesterday went to see the Governor-General and represented to him the view taken by the Commander-in-chief of the status of the three Ansairiyeh Christian conscripts, and recalled to his Excellency's mind some of the enactments securing religious liberty to the Sultan's subjects.

Halet Pasha did not at all share the opinion of Izzet Pasha, and told me that the latter having now left the entire responsibility of the enrolment of soldiers with him, he would cause the three Ansairiyehs in question to be brought before him and the Administrative Council for examination as to their religion. His Excellency further said, that he had hitherto looked upon these men as a fraction of the Ansairiyeh tribe, which has always furnished, regardless of its peculiar creed, its quota of recruits to the Turkish army.

To-day the three Ansairiyeh conscripts attended divine service at the Protestant (Presbyterian) Church, but whether or not they did so with the knowledge of their superior officers, I cannot say.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 16.

Sir H. Elliot to Earl Granville.—(Received December 5.)

(No. 422. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Therapia, November* 21, 1873.

RASCHID PASHA, in speaking to me yesterday of the misunderstanding with the Austrian Government about the Bosnian Christians, alluded to the non-withdrawal of Count Ludolf's note, and intimated that if it was not asked for within a few days he contemplated sending it back.

I strongly recommended him not to do anything of that nature precipitately, so as again to reopen a discussion on a question that was supposed to be closed.

He replied that it had been closed by explanations given, and steps taken, by the Porte upon the understanding that others in a similarly conciliatory spirit would be adopted by the Austro-Hungarian Government, which now showed no disposition to carry them out.

He had reason to complain that the Consul-General, whose expected transfer from Bosnia had been one of the inducements to the Porte to make the concessions desired by the Vienna Cabinet, had returned to his post, even before the leave of absence which had been given him had expired.

I said that if this was so, he had probably returned for the purpose of making arrangements for his final departure, but that in any case it would be advisable for the Porte to avoid anything likely to renew the irritation that had been felt at Vienna in reference to this matter.

In reply to my inquiry if he was aware whether the note of the 28th June had been sent by Count Ludolf upon his own authority or by instruction from his Government, Raschid Pasha replied that he could not at all say, and that he was not even sure that Count Andrassy was aware of its existence.

The feeling of the Turkish Ministers at present seems to be that they have been induced to make concessions on the faith of an understanding that has not been carried out on the other side, and that the effect, as apprehended by Mr. Consul Holmes, will be injurious to the authority of the Sultan's Government over the populations of Bosnia, and will thus compromise the future tranquillity of the province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 17.

Earl Granville to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 273.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 9, 1873.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency a copy of a memorandum of a conversation between the Italian Minister at this Court and Lord Tenterden,* respecting an act of oppression reported by the Italian Consul at Scutari, in Albania, as having been perpetrated by the Governor of that province against certain individuals of the Christian family of the Miridites, who it is stated having been induced by the Governor to come to Scutari, were by his orders disarmed and imprisoned in the fortress.

I have to instruct your Excellency to cause inquiries to be made into this matter, and to furnish me with any particulars you may be able to obtain in connection therewith.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 18.

Lord Tenterden to Mr. Patterson.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 13, 1873.

I AM directed by Earl Granville to acknowledge the receipt of your communication dated the 4th of October last, which has been forwarded to this Office through Mr. Bright, and to inform you that the case of the three Ansairiyeh Christians alluded to therein has already been brought to the knowledge of Her Majesty's Government by Her Majesty's Consul-General in Syria, and that representations have been addressed to the Turkish authorities with the view of procuring their release.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 19.

Earl Granville to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 276.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 15, 1873.

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your Excellency's despatch No. 422, Confidential, of the 21st ultimo, reporting a conversation which you have had with Raschid Pasha on the subject of the recent discussions between the Austrian and Turkish Governments respecting the Christians in Bosnia; and I beg to express to you my approval of the advice which you gave to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs in regard to the non-withdrawal of Count Ludolf's note.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 20.

Dr. Macaulay to Earl Granville.—(Received December 19.)

My Lord, 56, *Paternoster Row, E.C., London, December* 18, 1873.

YOU have no doubt had the matter of the persecutions of the Christians at Damascus and other places before you. I have a letter to-day from Damascus, saying that, except prompt interference is made, three noble fellows, soldiers or officers in the Turkish army, may be sacrificed in defiance of the nominal toleration laws of the Empire.

There is at present an outbreak of the fanatical "unity of Islam" spirit, and representations made at Constantinople are not attended to as in the time of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. American friends sadly speak of the fallen influence of England in Turkey. If your Lordship will only let Sir Henry Elliot know that you have heard of this

* No. 13.

Damascus affair, there will be more energy, and at all events the lives of these poor fellows will be spared. Do not let us have to say, "O, for an hour of Palmerston!"

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MACAULAY, M.D.

No. 21.

Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to Earl Granville.—(Received December 22.)

Dear Lord Granville, *White Rock Villa, Hastings, December 19, 1873.*

I BEG to recommend to your favourable notice the two papers I inclose herewith. They relate to a case of religious persecution at Damascus, and have been sent to me by Mr. Matheson, who states himself to be a member of the Committee of the Religious Tract Society, and in whose name he professes to write.

I have no reason to doubt the truth of the statement, though I cannot vouch for it; but I feel sure that you are no less disposed than I am to keep the Porte steady to its declarations in favour of religious freedom, and to have them enforced upon its provincial authorities.

It appears that life is endangered in the present instance, and any show of indifference on the part of England might not only seal the fate of the intended victims, but would be certain to render null in course of time those renunciations of a cruel superstition which were obtained from the Sultan with so much difficulty some years ago.

Pray, believe me, &c.
(Signed) STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE.

The accompanying papers reached me only yesterday.

S. DE R.

Inclosure 1 in No. 21.

The Rev. H. Wright to Dr. Macaulay.

(Extract.) *Damascus, November 3, 1873.*

I SEND you an account of three men who are undergoing persecution at Damascus for Christ's sake. I know the men well, and, like all others who know them, I have the fullest confidence in them. We are all here doing our best for their liberation; but a spirit of fanaticism has of late appeared among the Turks, in conjunction with the "Unity of Islam idea," and the cause of liberty of conscience in this land depends a great deal on this case.

Your early insertion (publication) of this may save the lives of these men, and may help to maintain the concessions granted by the hatti-sherif "to all converts." The whole case is before the English and American Governments, but England alone by firmness can rescue the men.

Inclosure 2 in No. 21.

Memorandum.

THREE men about 30 years of age, of the Ansairiyeh and Christian teachers, were seized in the village of Bhamra on the 7th September last, hurried off in chains to Damascus, and after being cruelly beaten and imprisoned they were drafted into the army. If not released they will certainly be put to death.

The name of one is Yousef Jedid, a widower; the other is Selim Khalify, a married man with a family; the name of the third is not given.

No. 22.

Lord Tenterden to Dr. Macaulay.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 23, 1873.*

I AM directed by Earl Granville to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant, and to inform you in reply that the case of the three Ansairiyeh Christians to which you refer has already occupied the attention of Her Majesty's Consul-General in Syria, and that representations have been made to the local authorities, and also at Constantinople, with the view of procuring their release.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 23.

The Rev. W. Wright to the Rev. J. Davis.—(Communicated to Earl Granville by the Rev. J. Davis, December 24.)

(Extract.) *Damascus, November 11, 1873.*

AT present we are having a great battle here to maintain the rights of converts to religious liberty. Three men who have been Protestants seventeen years, and who, with their children, were in full enjoyment of the ordinances of the Mission Church of Lattakia, have been brought into Damascus in chains, and are now in the army and being persecuted to conform to the rights of Islam. They were formerly Ansairiyeh, and have been for many years teachers and evangelists in their native villages. Perfect freedom is the law of the Empire for converts, and it will only be by stirring up public opinion at home that we shall be able to maintain it for them.

No. 24.

Earl Granville to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My dear Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, *Walmer Castle, Deal, December 28, 1873.*

MANY thanks for writing to me on the subject of the Ansairiyeh Christians.

I send you a short précis of what we know and have done on the subject.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Memorandum.

On the 19th of September, Mr. Eldridge, British Consul-General in Syria, reported to the Foreign Office, and also to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, that three young men of about thirty named Yussef Jedeed, Hassan Maklouf, and Selim Khalaify, of Ansairiyeh parentage, who were educated many years ago in the schools of a mission founded at Lattakia, and who were brought up as Christians and Protestants, and had for some years past been employed as teachers in the schools established by the mission, had been summoned before the Kaimakam of Lattakia, and arrested on the pretext that they were evading the conscription. Mr. Eldridge was informed that they had been ill-treated and made to march to Tripoli, from whence they were forwarded by French steamer to Beyrout, and were to be sent on to Damascus to be enrolled as recruits in the army. It was understood that these men had always been inscribed as Christians in the Government Registers, and that they had regularly paid the military tax, which is exacted from all Christian subjects of the Porte. Consul-General Eldridge, No. 29, September 19, 1873.

Mr. Kirby Green, British Vice-Consul at Damascus, who was instructed by Mr. Eldridge to watch over the case of these men, made representations in their behalf to the military authorities through one of the dragomans of the Vice-Consulate, and brought the matter himself before the Governor-General in an interview on the 11th of October. The Governor-General objected that the Ansairiyeh tribe, although pagans, Consul-General Eldridge, No. 30, November 1, 1873

had hitherto been obliged to furnish their proper share of recruits to the army, and that if it was admitted that those of them who embraced Christianity were to be exempted from military service, the whole tribe would quickly profess the Christian faith, and thus withdraw itself from an irksome duty. Mr. Green pointed out in reply that the present was an exceptional case, that there could be no doubt that these men were *bonâ fide* Christians, and had been hitherto accepted as such by the authorities. The Governor-General further stated that he had been in active correspondence with the United States Consul-General on the subject, and had referred the matter to Constantinople for decision.

Consul-General Eldridge, No. 82, November 19, 1873.

In a subsequent interview on the 8th of November the Governor-General told Mr. Green that he would cause the three men to be brought before him and the Administrative Council for examination as to their religion.

On the receipt of Mr. Eldridge's first despatch, Sir H. Elliot took steps for the purpose of procuring the men's release, and an instruction has now been addressed to him expressing the earnest hope of Her Majesty's Government that orders to that effect will at once be sent from Constantinople, if this step has not already been taken.

The treatment of the men is said to have improved since their arrival at Damascus, Mr. Green having heard that one of them had been punished for not observing the Ramadan, spoke to the Commander-in-chief on the subject.

According to Mr. Green's last report the men attended divine service at the Presbyterian Church on the 9th November, but whether with or without the knowledge of their superiors was not known.

Foreign Office, December 27, 1873.

No. 25.

Earl Granville to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 282.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 29, 1873.*

I HAVE received from Consul-General Eldridge copies of his despatches to your Excellency, Nos. 57, 60, and 62, relative to the case of the three Ansairiyeh Christians who have been forcibly enlisted in the Turkish army by the authorities in Syria, and whose claims to immunity on the ground of their religion appear to have been ignored.

I have no doubt that your Excellency has taken all proper measures with the view of procuring orders from the Porte for the release of these men, but I think it right that you should further inform Raschid Pasha that the matter has attracted considerable attention in this country, and that applications for the interference of Her Majesty's Government have reached me from various quarters.

There seems to be no doubt that the men in question have been brought up in the Christian faith from their childhood. Her Majesty's Government earnestly trust that there is no foundation for the reports that they have been ill-treated to induce them to change their religion, and that instructions will at once be sent, if, indeed, they have not already been given, for their release.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 26.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 30, 1873.*

WITH reference to the communication that you made to me on the 4th instant, relative to the case of three Christian converts of the Ansairiyeh tribe, who have been forcibly enlisted in the Turkish army, I am directed by Earl Granville to inform you that the matter has, from the first, occupied the attention of the British Consul-General in Syria, and that representations have been made both to the Turkish Governor-General at Damascus and Her Majesty's Ambassador to that Porte, with the view of procuring the release of these men.

According to the latest accounts received, the Governor-General had announced his intention of having the men brought before him and the Administrative Council for examination as to their religion.

A despatch has now been addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople instructing his Excellency to express to the Porte the earnest hope of Her Majesty's Government that orders will at once be given for the liberation of the men, if such directions have not already been sent.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 27.

The Rev. J. Davis to Lord Tenterden.—(Received January 2.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, January 1, 1874.

My Lord,

I BEG to thank you for your Lordship's gratifying communication on the subject of the steps taken by Her Majesty's Government for the protection of Christian converts in Damascus, which will, I am sure, be received with satisfaction by the members of our Council.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 28.

Vice-Consul Green to Earl Granville.—(Received February 9.)

(No. 1.)

My Lord, *Damascus, January 12, 1874.*

I HAVE the honour to state, with reference to the case of the three Christian Ansairiyeh conscripts, that I have recently received a petition from them, urging me to bring their state under your Lordship's notice.

As the petition does not differ materially from the paper drawn up by the Protestant missionaries, and forwarded by me from Beyrout on the 31st ultimo, I abstain from troubling your Lordship with a copy of it.

I am now informed by the Damascus missionaries, that as soon as the military authorities ascertained the converts attended Divine worship on Sundays at the Presbyterian Church, they put a stop to their doing so, by detaining them prisoners in their barracks.

I understand my French and Italian colleagues have also been appealed to by the converts, and that they have submitted the matter to the consideration of their Governments.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 29.

Mr. Locock to Earl Granville.—(Received February 18.)

(No. 21.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February 5, 1874.*

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Lordship's despatch No. 282 of the 29th December, to Sir Henry Elliot, relative to the case of the three Ansairiyeh Christians who have been forcibly enlisted in the Turkish army by the authorities in Syria, and instructing him to inform the Porte that the matter has attracted considerable attention in England; and that application for the interference of Her Majesty's Government have reached your Lordship from various quarters.

From the moment that this case, which appears to have been a very gross one, and attended with much cruelty, was brought to the knowledge of Sir Henry Elliot, his Excellency made it the subject of a fitting remonstrance with the Porte; and on a more recent occasion I myself communicated to Raschid Pasha a translation of a Memorandum regarding this case, signed by a number of Protestant missionaries in Syria, a copy of which has already, I understand, reached your Lordship. I, at the same time, impressed upon his Excellency the importance of giving immediate orders for the release of the men, in order to put an end to an act of gross irregularity and injustice, which would inevitably attract the notice of all the Protestant Powers.

I have the word of the Foreign Minister, that orders have already been sent for their immediate release and restoration to their homes.

Under these circumstances I have not thought it advisable at the present moment to carry out to the letter your Lordship's instructions, but will do so, should I find that the order of the Porte is not speedily executed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SIDNEY LOCOCK.

No. 30.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Locock.

(No. 35.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, February 21, 1874.*

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 21 of the 5th instant, relative to the case of the three Ansairiyeh Christians who have been forcibly enlisted in the Turkish army; and I beg to express to you my approval of the course which you have taken in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 31.

The Revs. W. Johnston and J. Rogers to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 25.)

My Lord, *3, Botanic Avenue, Belfast, February 23, 1874.*

AT a meeting of the Board of Missions of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, held at Belfast on the 9th instant, we were directed to forward to the Foreign Office the accompanying document, which had been transmitted to the Board by Mr. Wright, their own missionary at Damascus. Owing to the state of political matters the paper has been withheld to the present. We have now, however, the honour to place it in your Lordship's hands, and respectfully to invite your Lordship's attention to the statement it contains; to ask the interference of the Foreign Office, as far as it can be employed, on behalf of the parties so wronged; and in the interests of religious freedom infringed, as alleged, by the Turkish authorities, to invoke the influence of England.

We have, &c.
(Signed) WM. JOHNSTON, *Moderator of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in Ireland.*
JOHN ROGERS, *Convener, Jewish Mission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.*

Inclosure in No. 31.

Statement.

IT being a matter of public notoriety in Syria that three Ansairiyeh Christians from the district of Jebleh have been for about three months detained by the Turkish authorities in Damascus, and treated as Moslem conscripts, a meeting of persons of various nationalities was convened at Beyrout on the 15th December last, to consider the case and devise measures for their release.

From documents laid before the meeting facts were elicited not only proving gross irregularity on the part of certain Turkish officials, but also involving a violation of the laws which secure religious liberty to all subjects of the Ottoman Government so grave as to call for the attention of the foreign Powers interested in the maintenance of these laws. The facts are briefly as follow:—

That some time last summer the Kaïmakam (Governor) of Lattakia addressed a letter to the American Vice-Consul there, demanding not only the shutting of a long-established school, but the removal of the teacher and his family from the village.

That in the latter part of August, the above-mentioned official, having had his authority extended over the district of Jebleh, initiated his rule there by the seizure and

imprisonment of the three teachers, who had been for many years known as Christians, and had, as members of the Protestant community, paid taxes into the Turkish Treasury.

That the reason for their arrest was evidently no other than the fact of their being Christians, as is shown by the circumstances that the Kaïmakam at the same time summoned all the male Ansairiyeh Protestants in the district, and that one suspected individual who was apprehended was released on producing satisfactory evidence that he was still of the Ansairiyeh religion.

That the arrest of these men took place on Sabbath the 7th September, while they were assembled for worship; that on the 9th they were handcuffed and hurried with extreme cruelty to Jebleh, whence on the 13th they were sent in the same cruel manner to Tripoli; and that from Tripoli they were transferred to Damascus, which they reached on the 22nd September.

That on their arrival at Damascus they were imprisoned, maltreated, and reproached on account of their religion, and, finally, remaining firm in their religion, they were, by the semblance of a legal formality, drafted into the Turkish army.

That on Her Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul at Damascus applying to the Commander-in-chief of the Turkish forces on behalf of one of the three, Selim Khalify, who had been beaten and imprisoned, and was being starved to make him conform to the rites of the Moslem faith, the said Turkish officer, although he had previously received full information of all the facts, declared that there were no Christians in the army, and that all who were enrolled in it must comport themselves as Moslems.

That, notwithstanding repeated representations, these men are still detained as Moslem conscripts, and refused the exercise of Christian worship.

These facts, thus briefly stated, which have been substantially communicated to the Consulates-General of Great Britain and the United States, and through them to their respective Governments, can be proved in detail, if necessary, by documents that were laid before the meeting. They clearly show that the Turkish officials have in this case infringed the religious liberty of the three men in question, and by disregarding all remonstrance on the subject, have exhibited a persistent determination to violate the IXth Article of the Treaty of Paris, which ratifies the Hatti-Sherif guaranteeing religious toleration to the subjects of the Sublime Porte without distinction.

No question is here raised as to the legality of enrolling Christians, as such, in the Turkish army. The complaint is that these three men have been singled out and treated as criminals, although accused of no other offence than that of being Christians; and that, after being in an irregular and oppressive manner enrolled in the army, they have not been treated as Christians, but as Moslems.

The meeting being in possession of these facts, and impressed with the conviction that they have the significance here assigned to them, seeing that the efforts that have been made during the period that has elapsed since the men were arrested have not resulted in their release, feel constrained now to lay the matter before the Christian Powers, in the hope that they may make such investigations and adopt such measures as they may deem best, not only for the release and indemnification of these sufferers, but for the impartial execution in future of the laws by which the Ottoman Government has guaranteed religious liberty to all its subjects.

The circumstances connected with the arrest and imprisonment of these three men exhibiting, as has been shown, an attitude of hostility to the principle of religious liberty, it is clear that adequate redress must go beyond the mere release of the individuals, and take cognizance of that growing spirit of intolerance in the Turkish Empire which, if not directly fostered by the officers of the Government, is certainly not discountenanced by such proceedings as have here been detailed. That unoffending men, heads of families wholly dependent on them, while quietly engaged in the humble and honest avocation of teachers, should be suddenly seized by order of the Government, chained as felons, and driven before mounted horsemen, who held the ropes by which their arms were tightly bound behind their backs, until from sheer exhaustion they sank under the torture; that these men should thus be driven through the length of the land, in sight of an ignorant population who knew of no crime laid to their charge except that they professed the religion of Christ; that, when they reached Damascus, the focus of that fierce fanaticism which culminated in the massacres of 1860, they were imprisoned and maltreated, their religion reviled, and the exercise of its worship denied them; and that they should then be illegally drafted into the army, as only condemned criminals are forced into it; that all this, and much more of the like nature, should be done in the broad gaze of the whole Islamic population of Syria and Damascus, is not only a sad humiliation to all bearing the Christian name, but directly calculated to bring about a

repetition of the awful scenes of 1860. To forestall and prevent such disastrous calamities, the undersigned beg leave most respectfully and earnestly to request the Christian Powers to institute a thorough investigation into the whole subject. Fanaticism in such a country and among a people so inflammable is easily aroused, and, if not checked in time, may burst out in a wide-spread conflagration which the Government of the Sublime Porte may not be able either to control or extinguish.

(Signed) WM. M. THOMPSON, *American Mission, Chairman.*
JAMES ROBERTSON, *Church of Scotland Mission, Secretary.*
(And 15 others.)

No. 32.

Lord Tenterden to the Revs. W. Johnson and J. Rogers.

Gentlemen, *Foreign Office, February* 28, 1874.

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd instant, and of its inclosure, relative to the case of three Ansairiyeh Christians who have been publicly enlisted in the Turkish army by the authorities in Syria, and I am to inform you in reply that the matter has already been brought to the notice of the Porte, and that a despatch has been received from Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, reporting that orders have been sent for their immediate release and restoration to their homes.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 33.

Vice-Consul Green to Earl Granville.—(Received March 16.)

(No. 2. Political.)

My Lord, *Damascus, March* 3, 1874.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of a despatch and its inclosures I have this day forwarded to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, reporting to him the trials to which the three Ansairiyeh Christian conscripts are being subjected through the delay in the arrival of the order for their release.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 33.

Vice-Consul Green to Mr. Locock.

Sir, *Damascus, March* 3, 1874.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 17th ultimo, stating that no orders had yet been received here for the release of the three Christian Ansairiyeh conscripts, I have the honour to transmit herewith the copy of a letter addressed to me yesterday by the Protestant missionaries of this city.

The information it contains being in accordance with a report made to me by the Dragoman M. Selim Meshaka, I this morning called on the Commander-in-chief of the Syrian Army Corps and repeated my inquiry as to whether he had received orders from the Porte for the liberation of the converts. His Excellency stated that none had yet reached him, and on my urging him that the men should not be ill-treated, as I was sure the orders would shortly arrive, he assured me that I need express no anxiety in this direction. He, however, pretended to be greatly surprised when I told him that one of the men was in chains, and immediately sent to ascertain for what cause he was being so punished.

Although the Commander-in-chief's assurances are so far satisfactory, I believe a hope is still entertained that the converts may be induced to embrace the Mohammedan faith, and all delay in their release adds considerably to their trials.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 33.

The Revs. J. Crawford, W. Wright, and J. F. Patterson to Vice-Consul Green.

Dear Sir, *Damascus, March* 2, 1874.

WHEN we last inquired at the Consulate we ascertained from you that an order had been issued by the Turkish Government for the release of the three Protestant school-masters, who are being treated in Damascus as Moslem conscripts. We have been waiting anxiously for the arrival of these orders, but we have just heard that, instead of the men being released, they are being more harshly dealt with, and to-day the Dragoman of your Consulate saw one of the men, Daoud Suleiman, in chains for, as he was informed, the simple offence of saying, when asked his religion, that he was a Christian. The treatment of these men during the last five months is in direct violation of concessions and Treaty stipulations, and even the Turkish Government has acknowledged the illegality of that treatment. We beg you, therefore, once more to inquire into this extraordinary conduct of the Turkish military authorities in Damascus, and to insist on the immediate release of these sufferers.

We are, &c.
(Signed) JOHN CRAWFORD.
WILLIAM WRIGHT.
J. F. PATTERSON.

No. 34.

The Rev. W. Johnston to Lord Tenterden.—(Received March 6.)

My Lord, *Dunedin, Belfast, March* 4, 1874.

I HAD the honour to receive your letter of the 28th ultimo, intimating the action of the Foreign Office and the consequent release of the Syrian Christians, for which tidings we are very thankful.

May I request your Lordship to inform the Clerk in the Foreign Office that the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is a clergyman and not a layman, and is accustomed to be addressed in the same manner as the Very Rev. the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

I mention this that mistakes may be avoided in future.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WM. JOHNSTON, *Moderator.*

No. 35.

The Rev. J. Davis to Lord Tenterden.—(Received March 17.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,
My Lord, *London, March* 16, 1874.

REFERRING to the interview which I had the honour of having with your Lordship on the subject of religious persecution at Damascus, and your Lordship's very satisfactory letter dated December 30, I regret to have to forward to you a communication received this day from one of the missionaries in that city.

Our Council will feel greatly obliged if you will bring the matter before the attention of Lord Derby, whose interposition will yet, it is hoped, be powerful to obtain the release of these Christian converts, and the full exercise of religious liberty promised by the Ottoman Government.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

Inclosure in No. 35.

The Rev. W. Wright to the Rev. J. Davis.

Damascus, March 3, 1874.

My dear Sir,

The Acting Ambassador at Constantinople wrote our Vice-Consul here that Rashid Pacha, Minister for Foreign Affairs, had told him that orders were already issued for the release of Protestant school-masters who are being treated as Moslem conscripts.

The Commander-in-chief gave Mr. Green, Her Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul, evasive answers when he inquired, but said, perhaps "the orders were on the way."

On last Saturday we heard that the Commander-in-chief had called the three men to him, and told them he would release them on Monday (yesterday). We were anxiously awaiting the deliverance of the men when we were astonished by hearing that one of them was in chains, and the others were being more harshly dealt with.

An officer called Dawoud Suliman to him, and asked him what his religion was. He said he was a Christian, and forthwith the irons were put upon his feet. The Dragoman of the Consulate, Selim Meshaka, a member of our Church, saw the irons upon him. The Turks have been trying every means with these men; they actually gave one of them promotion, telling him how grieved they were his religion prevented him from occupying a good position. They have also been much exposed to the temptation of deserting. A purse also was laid in one of their ways, but he picked it up and took it to the officer. I have only time for these hurried words, but I fear the men are now in imminent danger.

Will England not save them? With many thanks for what you have already done, and hoping you will influence the Alliance in their behalf, I am, &c.

(Signed) WM. WRIGHT.

No. 36.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Locock.

Foreign Office, March 20, 1874.

(Telegraphic.)

HAVE instructions for the release of the three Ansairiyeh converts been given by the Porte? If not, endeavour to procure them at once.

No. 37.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Foreign Office, March 21, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your further letter of the 16th instant, on the subject of the three Christian converts detained by the Turkish Authorities at Damascus, and I am to state to you in reply that Her Majesty's Consul in that city has called the attention of the Commander-in-chief of the Syrian Army Corps to their case, and I am to add that Lord Derby has instructed Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople by telegraph to endeavour to procure orders for their immediate release, if they have not already been given.

I am, &c.

(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 38.

The Rev. J. Davis to Lord Tenterden.—(Received March 25.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, March 23, 1874.

My Lord,

I AM desired by the Council of this Alliance to thank you for your communication of the 21st instant, and also to ask you kindly to convey to Lord Derby their grateful acknowledgements for his Lordship's prompt attention to the subject of the three Christian converts imprisoned by the Turkish authorities at Damascus.

The Council sincerely hope that the action of Her Majesty's Government to secure religious liberty, both for the missionaries and their converts, will secure the end desired.

I remain, &c.

(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 39.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 30.)

(No. 3. Political.)

Damascus, March 18, 1874.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch to Lord Granville, No. 2 of the 3rd instant, concerning the continued detention of the three Christian Ansairiyeh school-masters in the Turkish army, I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of a further despatch, and its inclosure, on the same subject, which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 39.

Vice-Consul Green to Mr. Locock.

Damascus, March 18, 1874.

Sir,

ON the 3rd instant, I had the honour to inform you by my despatch of the renewed steps I had taken to ascertain whether the Commander-in-chief of the Syrian Army Corps had received the order for the dismissal of the three Christian Ansairiyeh conscripts, and for what reason one of them had been placed in irons. The assurances then given me by his Excellency were of a nature to lead to the hope that the men would be treated with proper humanity pending the arrival of their discharges, but from the accompanying copy of a letter since addressed to me by the Protestant missionaries, you will observe that the conscripts have been subjected to further ill-treatment.

From the information conveyed to me by the missionaries, and from the result of inquiries made by me in other quarters, I feared that the military authorities were endeavouring, through cruel measures, to drive the Ansairiyeh Christians either to desert or to commit some serious act of insubordination, in order that they might expose themselves to very severe military punishment; and I therefore thought it expedient to telegraph to you on the 16th instant, that, owing to the increased harsh treatment of the conscripts, I suggested the transmission of telegraphic orders for their release. I trust that my having ventured to do so will not meet with your disapproval.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 39.

The Revs. W. Wright, J. F. Patterson, and J. Crawford to Consul Green.

Damascus, March 14, 1874.

Dear Sir,

We regret that we are obliged to call your attention once more to the manner in which the three Protestant school-masters are being treated by the Turkish authorities at Damascus. One of them is still kept a close prisoner, though no charge has been brought against him, and he is suffering from the close confinement. The other two, though not so closely guarded, are frequently beaten by their officers without any apparent reason. An officer came up and struck one of them a severe blow in the face when going for his food, and they were both struck in the face when sitting in their rooms, the blows being always accompanied by the words "infidel dog." Even the officer in command at parade upbraids them publicly as infidels. Instead of an order having been issued for the release of the men, it seems to have been an order to use greater severity with them. The men are very much alarmed at the increasing cruelty of both officers and men towards them; and from all we can learn their condition is intolerable, and full of peril.

We pray you, therefore, to use whatever means at your disposal to release these men from this cruel and illegal detention.

We are, &c.
(Signed) WM. WRIGHT.
J. F. PATTERSON.
JOHN CRAWFORD.

No. 40.

Dr. Macaulay to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 1.)

My Lord Derby, *56, Paternoster Row, London, March 30, 1874.*

I HAVE a letter from Mr. Wright of Damascus to-day, in which he says that the three Christian soldiers recently ordered to be released are still kept as prisoners, although their chains are taken off. "Apparently, the Turks are waiting to see what the new Government in England will do, as they catch at any shadow of a chance against the concession in the matter of religious liberty and toleration. Their conduct is a breach of Treaty and concession."

On forwarding a previous letter from Mr. Wright to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe he stated the case to Lord Granville, who at once telegraphed to Constantinople. That prompt action saved the lives of the three men. The fanatical Moslem party will find themselves in error, if they count upon a change of policy by the late change of Government. The Turkish Government gave promise to our Ambassador that the men should be released, and I know that your Lordship will keep them to their pledge. Five minutes inquiry, or examination of the reports at the Foreign Office, will give the facts and merits of the case. Only it is necessary not to lose time, which Lord Granville did not do.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MACAULAY, M.D.,
Editor of the "Leisure Hour."

No. 41.

Lord Tenterden to Dr. Macaulay.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 1, 1874.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th ultimo, on the subject of the three Christian converts at Damascus, and I am to inform you, in reply, that instructions were sent on the 20th ultimo to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople to endeavour to procure their release at once, in the event of orders to that effect not having been already given by the Porte, and I am to add that inquiry will be made as to what has been done in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 42.

Mr. Lacock to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 17.)

(No. 103.)
My Lord, *Pera, April 8, 1874.*

ON receipt of Mr. Kirby Green's despatch No. 5 of the 18th ultimo, of which a copy was forwarded by him to your Lordship, informing me that the three Ansairiyeh conscripts are being treated with increased severity, I lost no time in calling Rashid Pasha's attention to the matter, and pointing out the necessity of sending fresh telegraphic orders. I have since furnished his Excellency, through Mr. Pisani, with a translation of the letter of the 14th ultimo from the Protestant missionaries at Damascus to Mr. Kirby Green, of which a copy was inclosed in the despatch above referred to. At the same time that I directed him to observe, on my part, to his Excellency, that the case was by no means (as he seemed to think it) one of simple improper drafting of Christians into the Ottoman army, but one of gross cruelty and insult to three men for no other reason

than that they professed the Christian religion. I could not imagine the Porte meant to sanction such deeds, although the fact that they had been so long allowed to continue would lead most people to suppose that such was the case. The matter was already beginning to make a noise abroad; petitions had been addressed to more than one foreign Government, and would soon be finding their way into the European journals.

Rashid Pasha, in reply, informed Mr. Pisani that he is attending very seriously to the question and hopes to settle it very shortly.

The American Legation is also urging the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SIDNEY LOCOCK.

No. 43.

Mr. Locock to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 17.)

No. 108.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 9, 1874.*

AT the Cabinet Council held yesterday at the Porte it was decided to send a Vizirial order to the leading members of the Hassounist section of the Armenian Catholic community in this capital to hand over to the Turkish Government the Church of St. Sauveur, which has, for the last few days, threatened to become the subject of serious dispute. The order was, however, to be accompanied by a formal promise that the Government would not give it over to the dissidents.

In conformity with this arrangement the keys of the church have been conveyed to the keeping of the Grand Vizier, who has sent an officer with a picket of police to watch over the church, which remains at present in possession of the Turkish authorities.

The chief object of the arrangement was to enforce obedience to the orders of the Grand Vizier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SIDNEY LOCOCK.

No. 44.

The Revs. W. Johnston and J. Rogers to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 20.)

My Lord, *[No date.]*

WE regret exceedingly to be compelled again to trouble your Lordship in the matter of the Ansairiyeh conscripts, which we had the honour of bringing under your Lordship's attention in our communication of February last, and to which we received so encouraging a reply, dated the 28th of that month; but the following letter, just received from our missionary at Damascus, which speaks for itself, leaves us no alternative:—

"Dear Sir, *Damascus, March 31, 1874.*

"I learn from different public sources (Whig and Record) that you have presented the case of the Ansairiyeh converts, who are now being treated in Damascus as Moslem conscripts, to the notice of Her Majesty's Government, and that you have received from Lord Tenterden the reply that 'orders have been sent for their immediate release and restoration to their homes.'

"I regret to have to inform you that this promise has not been fulfilled, but that the men have been treated with increasing cruelty since the promise was given. Many such promises have been given, but nothing has come of them. Izzet Pasha, the Commander-in-chief, promised to the American Consul-General to release them more than three months ago. Hulet Pasha, Wali of Syria, promised to Mr. Green, Her Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul at Damascus, that he would have the men examined, and if they were really Christian, he would have them treated as Christians. This promise, given three months ago, was not kept. The Commander-in-chief promised to Mr. Green that he would see the men should be kindly dealt with, and at the moment he was giving this promise one of the men was in irons—not in a solitary prison, but among the other soldiers, that they might have an opportunity to mock the 'Christian infidel.' Such imprisonment, the Commander-in-chief acknowledged to Mr. Green, was contrary to military law, and it took place since 'the order for their release' was said to have been issued. The men are never allowed to attend the service in the church, or assemble

together for prayer. One of them is now more than a month in close confinement, part of the time in chains, and no one knows for what cause. The other two men, who are prisoners at large, are addressed by their officers, even on parade, as 'jiours.'

"These men are now more than six months detained contrary to the law of the land, and contrary to international Treaty. The Turks believe that, by gaining time, with fair promises, and by cruelties and blandishments in turn, they may, in the end, be able to make these men yield. It thus becomes the duty of English Statesmen to urge Turkey, as she would be considered a civilized State, to respect her own sacred obligations, and to at once discontinue the open breach of Treaty stipulations, and it is the duty of the Christian Church to see that religious liberty in Turkey, which is the law of the land, shall not be sacrificed to empty promises which were never meant to be kept. The case of these men, at this moment, calls for your instant and earnest interference.

"I am, &c.

(Signed) "WM. WRIGHT.

"The Rev. John Rogers,
"Assembly's College."

We have, my Lord, only to add to the above the respectful but earnest appeal of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, that your Lordship will once more use the authority of the Foreign Office on behalf of the prisoners in question, against whose wrongs not only Christianity but civilization and even humanity itself revolt.

We have, &c.

(Signed) WM. JOHNSTON, *Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.*
JOHN ROGERS, *Convener of the Jewish Mission of the General Assembly.*

No. 45.

The Earl of Derby to Consul-General Eldridge.

Foreign Office, April 22, 1874.

(Telegraphic.)

HOW does the case of the Ansairiyeh conscripts now stand? Answer by telegraph.

No. 46.

Lord Tenterden to the Revs. W. Johnston and J. Rogers.

Foreign Office April 23, 1874.

Gentlemen,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to reply to your letter of the 20th instant, requesting that further representations may be made to the Turkish Government for the purpose of obtaining the release of the Ansairiyeh conscripts at Damascus, and I am to inform you that Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople reports that he has lately renewed his efforts with the Porte with the view to obtain the discharge of these men, and that Raschid Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, had informed him that he is attending very seriously to the question, and hopes to settle it very shortly.

He adds that the American Legation is also urging the matter on the Porte.

In the meantime, Lord Derby has called upon Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout to report by telegraph how the case now stands.

I am, &c.

(Signed) TENTERDEN

No. 47.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received April* 24.)

Beyrout, April 23, 1874.

(Telegraphic.)

CASE of Ansairiyeh conscripts unsatisfactory. No orders appear to have been received for their release; or Green reported yesterday that one was severely flogged

for refusing to join in public prayers; another has been kept close prisoner for two months since he communicated with Mr. Green, whose Report leaves by to-day's mail.

No. 48.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Locock.

(No. 98.) *Foreign Office, April* 21, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 103 of the 8th instant, and I have to convey to you my approval of the language which you used to Raschid Pacha with respect to the Ansairiyeh conscripts, and I now inclose a copy of a further letter from Messrs. Johnston and Rogers upon this subject.*

I am, &c,

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 49.

The Rev. J. Davis to Lord Tenterden.—(*Received April* 28.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, April 27, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE just received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Wright of Damascus, a copy of which I beg to inclose.

It is much to be regretted that, after the prompt and firm remonstrance of Her Majesty's Government, the imprisonment and sufferings of the three Ansairiyeh Christians should be prolonged notwithstanding the hopes held out to them that their persecution should cease.

I am informed that since the statement came from Her Britannic Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople that an order had been issued by the Turkish Government for the release of these Christian converts they have been more harshly treated by the Turkish Authorities, and that the promises of a speedy deliverance so cruelly violated made their continued detention the less endurable.

Your Lordship will, I hope, pardon me for again troubling you on the subject.

I remain, &c.

(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

Inclosure in No. 49.

The Rev. W. Wright to the Rev. J. Davis.

Damascus, April 8, 1874.

My dear Sir,

I HAVE just received your letter of the 27th March containing Lord Derby's reply of the 21st March with reference to the release of the Ansairiyeh Christians.

The prompt action of Her Majesty's Foreign Secretary is very gratifying, as it shows that he has a thorough appreciation of the grave bearings of the case and that he is not likely to be taken in by Turkish promises. I regret, however, to have to inform you that the matter, as far as the Turks are concerned, is still in the promising stage.

I inclose two letters which contain the latest information on the subject, and I may add that, from the cruel manner in which the men are being treated, I infer that the order which the Turks promised for the liberation of these men has never been issued, and further, that the Turks are not being kept up at Constantinople to their promise.

The question is still in its first stage and calls for vigorous sustained action.

I am, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM WRIGHT.

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* No. 44.

No. 50.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Locock.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, April* 29, 1874.

CONSUL-GENERAL ELDRIDGE reports by telegraph that the case of the Ansáiriyeh conscripts is unsatisfactory; no orders appear to have been received for their release. Consul Green reports that on the 22nd one was severely flogged for refusing to join in public prayers. Another has been kept close prisoner for two months since he communicated with Consul Green.

This matter is attracting much attention in England.

No. 51.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Foreign Office, April 30, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your further letter of the 27th instant respecting the continued ill-treatment of the three Ansáiriyeh Christians, and I am to inform you that renewed instructions have been sent by telegraph to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires in this matter.

I am, &c.

(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 52.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 5. Political.)

Damascus, April 22, 1874.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch to your Lordship, Political No. 3 of the 18th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith the copy of a further despatch I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, reporting to him the proceedings of the Turkish Authorities here with regard to the three Ansáiriyeh Christian conscripts.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 52.

Vice-Consul Green to Mr. Locock.

Damascus, April 22, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatches of the 24th ultimo and 8th instant respectively concerning the three Ansáiriyeh Christian conscripts.

I thought the recent arrival of Yawer Pasha, the new Commander-in-chief of the Syrian Army Corps, afforded a favourable opportunity for me to endeavour to ascertain the result of the inquiries which his Excellency Rachid Pasha informed you had been instituted at the instance of the United States' Minister. Yawer Pasha, whose frankness contrasts favourably with the conduct of many of the Turkish authorities with whom I have come in contact, has, however, been able to give me very little information on the subject, beyond that decisions had been come to and answers had been sent to the Porte before his arrival here.

Nevertheless, I have learnt from a confidential source that a military Court of inquiry reported about six weeks ago to Constantinople that it was most desirable for the well-being of the Turkish army that the Ansáiriyeh Christians should on no account be discharged from its ranks. The Court does not appear to have taken into consideration the grounds upon which their dismissal is claimed.

I have also been able to discover that the Porte has asked for explanations on the same subject from the Governor-General, Hulet Pasha, but I have no reason to believe

that his Excellency has been led to alter his opinion, reported by me, through Mr. Eldridge, on the 12th of October last. Halet Pasha then informed me that he had placed the whole case of the three men before the Porte, and that he was awaiting instructions as to their fate. It seems, therefore, almost unnecessary that further references should be made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the authorities in Syria, who must evidently have an interest in upholding the views originally taken up by them.

I regret to have to report, furthermore, that the three Ansáiriyeh Christians are still being subjected to considerable ill-treatment, and that each time I have felt obliged to question the military authorities regarding them they have had to submit to some additional act of cruelty; thus, last week, after I had paid my call on Yawer Pasha, Selim Khalife, one of the conscripts, was ordered to join in the public Moslem prayers, and on refusing was severely flogged. Daoud Suleiman, another of the men, has been kept a close prisoner, now nearly two months, ever since he sent to tell me that he had heard that orders had arrived for the discharge of his comrades and himself. Yawer Pasha, I believe, is not kept informed of these proceedings of his officers, for they persist in denying to him that Daoud Suleiman is imprisoned. The attempt to induce the men to desert is still continued, but whether it is desired by this means to get rid of them once for all, or to render them liable to very severe punishment, I cannot say.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 53.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 10. Political.)

Beyrout, April 23, 1874.

My Lord,

AT 2 P.M. to-day I had the honour to receive the following telegram from your Lordship: "How does case of Ansairiyeh conscripts now stand? Answer by telegraph." To which I have sent the following reply: "Case of Ansairiyeh conscripts unsatisfactory. No orders appear to have been received for their release. Mr. Green reported yesterday that one was severely flogged for refusing to join in public prayers. Another has been kept close prisoner for two months since he communicated with Mr. Green, whose report leaves by to-day's mail."

The conduct of the Ottoman Government with regard to these unfortunate men is to me quite unaccountable, as it is clearly in opposition to the promises which have been so frequently made that liberty of conscience should be respected in Turkey, there being no doubt about the *bona fides* of the present case, as it was originally reported by me last year to his Excellency Sir Henry Elliot in my despatch No. 57 of the 19th of September, of which a copy was forwarded to Earl Granville in my despatch No. 29 of the same date.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 54.

The Rev. W. Johnston to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 6.)

Dunedin, Belfast, May 5, 1874.

My Lord,

LAST week I had the honour of receiving from Lord Tenterden a communication as to the action taken by the Government for the release of the Syrian conscripts, and his Lordship stated that a telegram had been sent to the British Consul at Constantinople, inquiring as to the action of the Turkish Government.

I beg to submit for the information and consideration of your Lordship and the Government the following letter just received from the Rev. Mr. Wright, one of the missionaries of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church at Damascus, addressed to the Governor of the Mission:—

"*Damascus, April* 17, 1874.

"Dear Mr. Rogers,

"The state of the conscripts has in nothing changed since I last wrote to you. The man who is imprisoned now over two months without being told his offence is in a bad

fever for the last six days; the other men are urged to become Moslems by their officers, and sometimes advised to desert. The Turks want some cause of complaint against them, for which they might remove their heads and stop all further trouble, but they have for the last seven months most bravely maintained blameless lives in the face of the most skilfully presented temptations.

(Signed) "WM. WRIGHT."

The Directors of the Assembly's missions feel very grateful for the prompt action taken in this matter by Her Majesty's Ministers, and as illness has now been superinduced by imprisonment, they trust the release of the conscripts will soon be secured.

A deputation from the Directors, consisting of the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Governor of the Mission, and some other members of the Church, will be in London next week, and I am instructed to ask your Lordship on what day and at what hour it would be convenient for your Lordship to favour us with an interview on this subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WM. JOHNSTON.

No. 55.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Locock.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 7, 1874, 4·45 P.M.*

WHAT has been done in the matter of the three Ansairiyeh conscripts?

No. 56.

Mr. Locock to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 9, at noon.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 8, 1874, 1·40 P.M.*

IN reply to your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, the matter of the three conscripts is being inquired into personally by the Grand Vizier. I will telegraph result.

No. 57.

Mr. Locock to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 11.)

(No. 128.) *Pera, April 30, 1874.*

My Lord,

I HAD the honour to receive last night your Lordship's telegram of the same evening, acquainting me with the report which had been received from Mr. Consul-General Eldridge, that on the 22nd of this month one of the Ansairiyeh conscripts, for whose release this Embassy and the United States' Legation have in vain for some time been applying, was severely beaten because he refused to take part in public Moslem prayers, while another had been kept in close confinement for the last two months.

I regret that it will be beyond my power to make another representation to the Porte on this, or indeed on any other matter, for the next two days. During the whole of the present week the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Grand Vizier have been occupied with public religious ceremonies, and official Court receptions, connected with the birthday of the Prophet, the presentation of the new Austrian Ambassador, and the arrival of the Prince of Servia, and the absence of anything like a proper organisation in the Foreign Department, especially since the removal of the late Mustesbar, or Under-Secretary of State, is so complete, that for the transaction of the most ordinary routine business it is necessary to obtain a personal interview with the Minister.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SIDNEY LOCOCK.

No. 58.

Mr. Locock to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May 12, 1874.*

THE telegram received by the Grand Vizier states that the three conscripts are individuals in disguise properly enlisted, and now doing duty in their respective battalions, and that they have not been harshly treated or flogged.

I shall follow up the case unofficially.

No. 59.

Mr. Locock to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 15.)

(No. 134.) *Therapia, May 5, 1874.*

My Lord,

I THIS day availed myself of the earliest opportunity which I have been able to obtain of seeing the Grand Vizier on the subject of the continued cruelties which are being perpetrated on the Ansairiyeh conscripts, as described in your Lordship's telegram of the 29th ultimo.

I mentioned to His Highness that, as the persons in whose behalf I was about to speak were subjects of the Porte, it was necessary that my communication should be regarded as unofficial. It was not the less incumbent on me, however, to invite his attention to the subject, as it was one which had been repeatedly brought before Her Majesty's Government, and was attracting considerable attention, having already got into both English and American newspapers. It was now eight months since these three Christians had been taken away from their homes and driven like felons to Damascus, where they were drafted into the Turkish army; since this time they had been frequently subject to acts of persecution with the object of making them abjure their religion. During the last eight months, both Her Majesty's Embassy and the United States' Legation had on various occasions invoked the assistance of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to put an end to what I could hardly believe the Porte could approve; but all that had been done was to write for reports or send orders which were without result. The men were still in the army, and continually being exposed to insult and intimidation, and not only so, but one of them had been for the last two months in confinement, while another had been flogged for refusing to join in public Moslem prayer.

His Highness declared he could not believe that it was as I said, and that if it was a fact that they were undergoing punishment, it must be because they have committed some offence or crime, and not because they were Christians.

I assured His Highness that I had good reason to believe that I was stating the case accurately, as Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus had been several times in communication with the authorities, including the lately appointed Military Governor, Yawer Pasha, and it had never yet been alleged to him that they were undergoing punishment for any recognized fault.

His Highness said that at all event he would see at once himself into the case, and calling one of his Aide-de-camps, he sent him to the Ministry of War to bring to him whatever reports had been received on the subject, while to another person whom he summoned, he dictated a telegram to Yawer Pasha, instructing him to reply immediately by telegraph why it was that the men are being kept in the army if they are Christians, and for what reason they are being ill-treated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SIDNEY LOCOCK.

No. 60.

The Rev. A. Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 15.)

Bible House, Constantinople, May 7, 1874.

My Lord,

AS a member of the Turkey Branch of the Evangelical Alliance, it has been thought desirable that I should transmit to your Lordship the inclosed copy of a communication addressed to Sidney Locock, Esq., Secretary to Her Majesty's Embassy at the Sublime Porte, by the Secretary of the said Turkey Branch of the Evangelical Alliance. The

paper a parts to the Embassy the most recent intelligence that has reached us respecting the three Ansairiyeh Christian teachers that were some months ago drafted into the Turkish army, were required to conform in all respects to the example of their Moslem comrades, and were ultimately cast into prison.

For the energetic action taken by Her Majesty's Foreign Office when this matter was first reported we all felt extremely grateful, and hoped that this wanton aggression on the rights of these Christian brethren would soon be redressed. But from the inclosed paper your Lordship will see that it is far otherwise, and that urgent measures must be adopted at once if these humble confessors are to be relieved from persecution.

As these individuals had been known for many years, some of them we are informed as long as seventeen years, as Christian converts, had paid the capitation tax as such, and were peaceably and usefully employed as teachers; there seems no way of accounting for the persevering hostility to which they have been subjected, except on the supposition that the local authorities have lent themselves to be the tools of fanaticism, or of the intrigues of rival religious sects. We are willing to believe that what took place was without the knowledge or approbation of the Turkish Government, which has in many instances honestly and impartially fulfilled its pledges to maintain religious liberty among its subjects. But the long delay that has occurred, and that we fear may yet occur, before the wrongs of these men are redressed, fills us with apprehensions of a retrograde policy in regard to religious liberty in the Turkish Empire, which we should deplore as most disastrous, and to prevent which we invoke the energetic protest of Her Majesty's Government.

Just as I write, the Rev. Mr. Herrick has shown me the reply he has just received from Mr. Secretary Locock to the communication of which the inclosed is a copy. Mr. Locock states that he had called on the Grand Vizier and made a fresh appeal in behalf of these Ansairiyeh conscripts, and that the Grand Vizier had in his presence telegraphed to the Military Governor of Damascus, demanding an instant explanation of the alleged detention of these men; further that the Grand Vizier refused to admit the correctness of the report now made to him, but that Mr. Locock had replied that Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Damascus, where their imprisonment was not denied, was likewise urging their case.

Notwithstanding the favourable attitude of the Grand Vizier, we feel constrained, in view of the delay that has already occurred, to entreat your Lordship to lose no time in giving expression to your powerful remonstrance in behalf of these innocent sufferers; and we feel convinced that by such action your Lordship will not only manifest the sympathy of Britain for men who are suffering wrongfully, but pursue a course of truest friendship towards the Turkish Empire itself.

In the name and by the authority of the Turkey Branch of the Evangelical Alliance,
(Signed) ALEXANDER THOMSON.

Inclosure in No. 60.

The Rev. G. Herrick to Mr. Locock.

Bible House, Constantinople, May 2, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE received, under date of the 26th ultimo, a letter from the Syrian Branch of the Evangelical Alliance, Beyrout, the Rev. Mr. Robertson, a short letter concerning the case of the Ansairiyeh Christian teachers, now imprisoned under military guard at Damascus,—a case which has already enlisted your generous sympathy and kind offices.

I give you below a copy of the greater part of the above-mentioned letter:—

"In a private note from Rev. Mr. Wright, at Damascus, on Saturday last are these words:—'The state of the poor converts has in nothing improved. Daoud is still in prison, and for the last six days has been ill of typhus fever. The officers urged the other two to become Moslems, and not being able to prevail upon them, advised them to desert.'"

The meaning of this you can easily divine. But we must see to it that the men are not got rid of in this way. Her Majesty's Foreign Office seems to have acted most energetically, and we cannot understand what is the cause of all this delay. It is now months since the British Consul at Damascus was informed from the Embassy that an order had been sent for their release. The Foreign Office is surely not aware that its urgent request is so little heeded at the Porte. I am sure I need not multiply words to show you the importance of your energetic action at Constantinople, &c.

There is the greater urgency that this case be pressed to a speedy and successful issue from the manifest fact that it is one, and a specially glaring instance of an alarming tendency on the part of the Turkish Government to curtail religious liberty, and evade any honest fulfilment of its pledges given in past years in this regard. I know very well, however, that there is no lack of interest or of energetic action on your own part, and it is sufficient that I should communicate thus briefly the information I have received, trusting with all confidence in your doing all it is possible to do to accelerate the exceedingly tardy justice of the Turkish Government.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) GEO. F. HERRICK,
Secretary, pro tem., of the Turkey Branch of the Evangelical Alliance.

No. 61.

The Rev. W. Wright to the Rev. J. Davis.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by the Rev. J. Davis, May 15.)

Damascus, March 22, 1874.

Dear Mr. Davis,

JUST a word to say that the state of the converts in Damascus is getting still worse. Selim Khalify was beaten by his officer Mohamed Aga last Saturday, and made him take part in the Moslem prayers. I saw him yesterday and he was still suffering, but they are all holding fast by their profession. Daoud Suleiman is still kept a close prisoner, though he has never been told for what offence. The difficulty of the Government seems to be to get rid of these men without making a precedent for future converts. We want such a precedent.

Yours most truly,
(Signed) WM. WRIGHT.

Damascus, April 17, 1874.

Dear Mr. Davis,

The state of these poor men is in no way improved since I last wrote. The man imprisoned has never been liberated nor told his offence, and for the last six days he has been ill with fever. I saw two of the men to-day. The officers still urge them to apostatize in order to be promoted, and last night, when an officer had failed to make Khalify yield, he proposed to him that he ought to desert.

Temptations of all kinds are placed in their way, but as yet the Turks have found no cause of complaint against them except that they are Christians.

I commence itinerating to-morrow, but I shall have your letters attended to in my absence. Do all you can for these poor fellows who are holding out so bravely.

Yours most truly,
(Signed) WM. WRIGHT.

No. 62.

The Earl of Derby to Consul-General Eldridge.

Foreign Office, May 15, 1874.

(Telegraphic.)

HER Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople reports that Grand Vizier states that the three Ansairiyeh conscripts are individuals properly enlisted, and denies that they have been harshly treated or flogged.

Ascertain and report both to me and to Constantinople the true facts of the case.

No. 63.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Locock.

Foreign Office, May 16, 1874.

(No. 116.)

Sir,

I HAVE communicated to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout by telegraph the substance of your telegram of the 12th instant, relative to the Ansairiyeh Christian converts at Damascus, and have instructed him to ascertain and report to me the true facts of the case.

In the meantime, I approve of your continuing to exert your good offices in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 64.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 16, 1874.*

WITH reference to our recent interview on the subject of the Christian converts at Damascus, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that the Grand Vizier has stated to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople that the three conscripts are individuals properly enlisted and now doing duty in their respective battalions, and that they have not been harshly treated or flogged.

I am to add that Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout has been instructed by telegraph to ascertain and report the true facts of the case, and that Mr. Locock at Constantinople will continue to exert his good offices as heretofore.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 65.

Mr. Locock to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 19.)

(No. 145.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May 11, 1874.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 134 of the 5th instant, on the subject of the three Ansairiyeh conscripts, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship a translation of the telegram which has been received by the Grand Vizier from Yawer Pasha, dated Damascus, 7th May, in reply to his Highness' inquiry, and which has been sent to me by his Highness for my information.

I shall lose no time in acquainting Consul Kirby Green of the nature of this reply, in order that he may make renewed inquiries, and furnish me with whatever fresh evidence he can collect in the case.

I shall continue to follow up the case direct and personally with the Grand Vizier until the return of Her Majesty's Ambassador, though in an unofficial manner, as I am perfectly aware that it would be most undesirable that any action should be taken in the matter by this Embassy, which could be rightly construed into a forcible interference in the internal affairs of the Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SIDNEY LOCOCK.

P.S.—I have the honour to add a copy of an instruction which I have thought it as well to write to Mr. Green on the subject.

Inclosure 1 in No. 65.

Yawer Pasha to the Grand Vizier.

(Translation.)
(Telegraphic.) *Damascus, April 25/May 7, 1874.*

THE three men referred to in your Highness' telegram of the 22nd April, were individuals in disguise, who have been enlisted into the army. They have not been harshly treated or flogged, and nothing has been done to them apart from what the military law prescribes. They are now serving in their respective battalions, and duly perform their military duty. I shall report the details by next post.

Inclosure 2 in No. 65.

Mr. Locock to Vice-Consul Green.

Therapia, May 11, 1874.

Sir,

INCLOSED is a translation of a telegram which has been received by the Grand Vizier from Yawer Pasha, denying the alleged ill-treatment of the three Ansairiyeh Christians, and apparently the fact that the men are Christians, though this is not actually stated.

I have already communicated its contents to you by telegraph. Whilst endeavouring to test the accuracy of Yawer Pasha's report, you will be careful in your communication with his Excellency not to give any cause of offence or invitation, as not only would such very possibly be visited on the very men of whose behalf you are acting, but it might give rise to a complaint on the part of the Porte of improper interference in the internal affairs of Turkey.

It is, however, in the interests of this country itself that the reports which have found their way to Europe, and even America, of unjust and harsh treatment to these men for no other reason than that they are Christians should be examined into, in order that, if unfounded, they may be contradicted; and, if true, a stop may be put to the treatment complained of.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SIDNEY LOCOCK.

No. 66.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 6. Political.)
My Lord, *Damascus, May 5, 1874.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of a despatch and its inclosures, addressed by me this day to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople. I place before Mr. Locock the grounds upon which the British and American missionaries at Lattakia have claimed the discharge from the Turkish army of their three Ansairiyeh Christian teachers, and I report that no orders have yet reached Damascus for the release of these men.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 66.

Vice-Consul Green to Mr. Locock.

Damascus, May 5, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your information, the copy of a letter addressed to me by the Rev. Dr. Martin, the British member of the American and British Mission to the Ansairiyeh. Dr. Martin is anxious to point out clearly on what grounds he and his colleagues claim the liberation of their three teachers, who are still detained as soldiers in the Turkish army.

I have always been careful to explain to the Authorities here that my intervention on behalf of the three Ansairiyeh Christians was and is based on the grounds stated by Dr. Martin, and from my past Reports to the Embassy, you will see that both the Vali and the Commander-in-chief have understood this perfectly.

No orders, I am assured, have yet reached this from the Porte for the release of the three men in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 66.

The Rev. J. Martin to Vice-Consul Green.

Beyrout, May 4, 1874.

Sir,

AS I have some reason to suspect that the release of our three teachers—Christian converts from the Ansairiyeh—is being sought by the American Embassy on the ground that they were servants or *protégés* of American residents, will you permit me to express to you the hope that no countenance will be given by the English Consulates or Embassy to such a presentation of the case.

The ground taken by the English officials has been, I believe all along, that the men are Christians, and that their rights as Christians and Ottoman subjects have been and are being violated.

I trust that although it be true that the American Embassy is presenting the case on the above footing; and even although there might be a prospect of obtaining the release of the men as *protégés*, or as servants of American and English residents, the case will be pressed forward none the less earnestly by the British Embassy upon the principles of religious liberty.

I would indeed greatly regret that we should receive the men back on the assumption that they were under American or English protection, and find that we had laboured in vain to have their Christian rights (their rights as Christians) recognized.

The assumption is a false one, and would, I feel sure, be rejected by the Turkish Government, except, perhaps, to serve a purpose, and in such a case as the present.

The men are Ottoman subjects, and heads of families, and they are Christians, and we seek their release from their illegal detention in the army, and from Moslem persecution.

My American colleagues at Lattakia are, I believe, all of them, of the same mind as myself in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MARTIN,
British Member of the American and British Mission to the Ansairiyeh.

No. 67.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

Beyrout, May 20, 1874.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, I believe there are no other important facts than those already reported by Mr. Green and me, which I believe are true. Further reports from Green on the way home.

No. 68.

Papers communicated to the Earl of Derby by the Rev. J. Davis.

Extract from the "Hatti Humayoun."

AS all religions are freely professed in my dominions, none of my subjects shall be hindered in the exercise of the religion he professes, nor shall he be molested in the exercise of it.

Extract from a Letter written by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to Mr. Davis, dated October 16, 1864.

Her Majesty's Government have, in my opinion, most rightful and urgent motives for keeping the Turkish Authorities to a full execution of the "Hatti Humayoun," and, in particular, for pressing upon them the bounden duty of not impairing or allowing to be impaired that part of the Imperial Charter which provides for the complete enjoyment of religious freedom and its open exercise without molestation by all classes and every individual of the Sultan's subjects.

No. 69.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. A. Thomson.

Foreign Office, May 22, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant, relating to the case of the Ansairiyeh conscripts at Damascus.

As you are in correspondence with Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires it is probable that you are in the receipt of the latest information on the subject, but I am, nevertheless, desired to state to you that it appears from the last despatches from Constantinople that the Grand Vizier states that the three conscripts are individuals properly enlisted and now doing duty in their respective battalions, and that they have not been harshly treated or flogged.

I am to add that Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout has been requested by telegram to ascertain and report the true facts of the case.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

P.S.—Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout has since reported that he has no further important facts to report, but that further despatches are on their way home.

T.

No. 70.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Locock.

(No. 120.)

Foreign Office, May 23, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your despatch No. 134 of May 5, reporting a conversation which you had had with the Grand Vizier on the subject of the alleged persecution of the three Ansairiyeh conscripts at Damascus, and I have to convey to you my approval of the language which you held on that occasion, and of your conduct as reported in No. 145 since received.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 71.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 7. Political.)

Damascus, May 12, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith for your Lordship's information the copy of a despatch I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, bringing under his notice the manner in which the Turkish authorities have replied to certain inquiries of the Porte concerning the position and treatment of the three Ansairiyeh Christian conscripts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 71.

Vice-Consul Green to Mr. Locock.

Damascus, May 12, 1874.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatches of the 22nd April and 5th instant, I have the honour to report that I have ascertained that both the Governor-General and the Commander-in-chief have, within the last few days, received further telegraphic inquiries from the Porte about the case of the Ansairiyeh Christian conscripts, and whether it is true that one of them is detained in prison.

Halet Pasha has replied by indorsing all his former reports as to the inexpediency of permitting on any account the discharge of the men, and the Mouchir has adhered to this view, adding that it is untrue that one of the conscripts is imprisoned.

I regret, however, to have to reiterate that Daoud Suleiman still continues a prisoner in the quarters assigned to him, that his health has so far given way under close confinement that he is spitting blood, and that he fears to take the remedies prescribed by the Moslem doctors lest they should aggravate his state. The other two soldiers are constantly ill-treated for refusing to join in the public Mohammedan prayers, and then are all spoken of by their officers, even to my dragoman, as "Giaours" (infidel dogs)

I fear, as I have already intimated in my despatch of the 22nd April, that if the reports sent by this vilayet are to be taken as truthful, the promised liberation of the three Christians must necessarily remain unaccomplished.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 72.

Mr. Locock to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 162.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May* 18, 1874.

I SPOKE again to the Grand Vizier to-day on the subject of the three Ansairiyeh conscripts, and referring to the statement in the telegram which he had communicated to me, and of which a copy was inclosed in my despatch No. 145 of the 12th instant, that the men were disguised individuals, I succeeded at last, but not without difficulty, in bringing him to admit that possibly the men might have been brought up from their childhood in the Christian religion. His Highness would not, however, recognize the possibility of their having ever paid the exemption tax. He said that he was willing to suppose that I was correctly informed as to these three individuals having been educated in a Christian school, having then served in it as teachers, and being well known to the missionaries and reputed to be Protestants. That did not make them Christians in the eyes of the military law, or release them from the obligation of serving in the army if they were born of Mussulman or Ansairiyeh parents. By Turkish law, the sons of Mussulmans were treated as Mussulmans and bound to serve in the army, even if they had been brought up as Christians from two years old, and it was on this very ground that he did not believe it possible that they had paid the tax exempting them from military service.

I observed to his Highness that if this principle were carried out it could no longer be a fact that there were no Christians in the Ottoman army. He replied that the fact, on the contrary, remained, as the law did not recognize such men as Christians at all, but as Mahomedans.

I told his Highness that I was sorry to receive such an answer from him, which sounded to me not at all in conformity with the principles of the Hatti-Houmayoun, which guaranteed religious freedom throughout the Empire. That independently of the lot of the three men in question I regretted it, because their case was already attracting attention in England, and it was not impossible that it might come before Parliament and correspondence asked for, in which case, the publication of such an answer would certainly create a painful impression and one unfavourable to Turkey.

His Highness only answered that he was still expecting details by the post, but that it would be useless to urge the matter as it was impossible for the Porte to act contrary to the regulations.

I have since been informed that the military law is as described by his Highness.

I begin to fear that there is but little chance of obtaining the release of these men from the military service, and if this is the case, it may become a question whether it is wise or beneficial to the men themselves to interfere any further in their behalf. It may be said that even if serving in the Turkish army they are entitled to freedom of joining in Christian worship, exemption from attending Moslem public prayers, and protection by the authorities from insult and ill-treatment. The two first propositions would probably be denied by the Porte, who would argue that the men are not Christians but Mussulmans, and that Mussulmans in the army are not allowed to attend Christian worship, or to absent themselves from their own public worship. As to insult and ill-treatment, it will always be difficult, except in case of gross cruelty, to establish the fact so conclusively as to preclude contradiction.

The action of the Embassy in this matter has hitherto been carefully confined within unofficial limits, in consequence of the question being an internal one, but your Lordship may possibly be of opinion that those limits have now been reached.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SIDNEY LOCOCK.

No. 73.

Dr. Macaulay to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 28.)

My Lord Derby, 56, *Paternoster Row, London, May* 27, 1874.

I HAVE a letter from Mr. Wright, of Damascus, dated 13th May, the substance of which is briefly as follows:—

A despatch was sent from Constantinople to the Commander-in-chief of the Syrian corps at Damascus, inquiring about the prisoners said to be persecuted. A subordinate (a fanatical man, under the influence of the Dervishes) dictated the answer, stating that the men were well treated; that none of them had been imprisoned or beaten; but that it was necessary to keep them under arrest, else many of the faithful would become infidels.

The writer of this false despatch has been heard to say, that "the English Government has interfered; but the English Government is only like a drum,—'skin and wind.'"

Meanwhile the prisoners are cruelly treated, often severely beaten, for not joining in the Moslem prayers; and one of these, Dawoud Suliman, is in wretched condition, apparently soon to become a martyr to his conscientious belief in Christianity.

Khalify had been promoted on account of his education, but has been degraded because he will not cease to be an infidel, and often cruelly beaten.

All which is against the express laws of the Turkish Empire, and in defiance of the Treaty of Paris engagements.

The Consul at Damascus knows the state of the case; and our Minister at Constantinople must surely know it. But who will take trouble about poor Christian soldiers? Were it only to let the people know that English influence is more than "skin and wind," this matter ought to be pressed, and the freedom of the poor fellows demanded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MACAULAY, M.D.,
Editor of the "Leisure Hour."

P.S.—I may say that Mr. Wright's reference to this matter is only incidental. My corespondence with him is about some papers he is writing for the "Leisure Hour," about Baalbek and Hauran. No one knows so much as he does about these regions. He is successor to Mr. Porter, author of the "Handbook of Syria."

J. M.

No. 74.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 8. Political.)
My Lord, *Damascus, May* 14, 1874.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch sent this day by me to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, on the subject of the incorrectness of the report furnished by Yawer Pasha to the Porte, on the treatment of the three Ansairiyeh Christian soldiers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 74.

Vice-Consul Green to Mr. Locock.

Sir, *Damascus, May* 14, 1874.

YESTERDAY I had the honour to receive your telegram of the day before, informing me that Yawer Pasha had sent the Grand Vizier a report denying that the three Ansairiyeh Christians had been treated harshly or flogged, and adding that they were all serving in their respective battalions.

This morning I sent a telegram in reply, stating that Yawer Pasha's report was incorrect; for not only had the men been cruelly treated and one of them beaten, but

Daoud Suleiman had never joined a battalion and had never been clothed nor paid as a soldier.

In my despatch No. 13 of the 12th instant I met, by anticipation, all the denials of Yawer Pasha; and I presume it is needless for me to repeat statements which Halet Pasha or Yawer Pasha may find it convenient to contradict. I can only assure you that I am most careful to verify all facts I communicate, and that I generally abstain from adding details to avoid giving undue length to my reports.

Although I am quite prepared to stand by all I have written to you, the right to claim the discharge of the three men from the Turkish army cannot be affected whether I fail or not to substantiate that they have been cruelly treated by the military authorities.

The question that I infer Halet Pasha and Yawer Pasha avoid answering by contradicting some of my statements is whether the men are Christians or not. The late Mouchir, Izzet Pasha, informed me that no Christians could be permitted to serve in the Turkish army, and that all its soldiers were Mahommedans and had to comport themselves as such. If the authorities have since discovered that the three Ansairiyeh are really Christians, the discovery is sufficient to prove that the men were enrolled under a misapprehension; that is, that they were Mahommedans. Their harsh treatment is quite a secondary matter, and one only affecting my veracity or the correctness of the information supplied to me.

I solicit your pardon if I have overstepped my functions by retracing this affair to its original basis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 75.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 9. Political.)

Damascus, May 17, 1874.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch, Political, No. 8 of the 14th instant, I have the honour to furnish your Lordship with copies of further correspondence with Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople on the subject of the treatment of the three Ansairiyeh Christian soldiers by the military authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 75.

Vice-Consul Green to Mr. Locock.

Damascus, May 17, 1874.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 14th instant, I have the honour to report that, on the 15th, one of the British missionaries here handed to me a petition from the three Ansairiyeh Christians, of which the inclosed is a translation. I communicated it because it shows that the men find their position sufficiently intolerable to ask, if nothing else can be done for them, that they may be transferred to the Christian regiment of cavalry stationed in the Lebanon.

The missionary informed me, at the same time, that Daoud Suleiman had that very day been supplied with a military uniform, and that other steps had been taken with regard to the three men, showing that a disposition had arisen on the part of the military authorities to remove all appearance of persecution against them. I told the missionary that I attributed all this to the telegrams which had lately passed between the Embassy and the Vice-Consulate, and which had probably come to the knowledge of the authorities.

As I am inclined to place great belief in the desire of Yawer Pasha to act in a straightforward manner, I called yesterday morning upon his Excellency and explained to him that our reports to Constantinople with regard to the three Christians did not exactly coincide. Yawer Pasha said he was entirely in the hands of his subordinates on such matters of military detail, but that he did not doubt that my information was the most correct.

He begged me to send him my dragoman, Mr. Selim Meshaka, in order that he might conduct an aide-de-camp to the quarters where Daoud Suleiman was confined. I furnish herewith a copy of Mr. Meshaka's report of what occurred, and how Daoud Suleiman declared to the aide-de-camp that he had been imprisoned for upwards of two months and had only received his military uniform the day before.

Yawer Pasha has promised me, as soon as the Raïs Pasha returns from Beyrout, to hold an inquiry, in conjunction with that official, on everything connected with the position of the three men. I am, however, of opinion that his Excellency will not be able to carry out officially all the liberal ideas he has expressed to me on this matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 75.

The three Ansairiyeh Christian Soldiers to Vice-Consul Green.

(Translation.)

WE, three unfortunate persons, depose here that we have now been eight months and three days in a most pitiable state, near unto death; but is not the whole of our case known to you!

We are well aware that you feel for us from the bottom of your heart and that you regret greatly our state.

For the Redeemer's sake, who redeemed you by His blood, take the expedient steps for our deliverance or transfer, if necessary, to the Christian troops of Mount Lebanon, or send us to Europe. In the meanwhile we pray for the welfare of our brethren (Ansairiyeh Christians). If you report our position through the telegraph you will be the means of spreading God's word. We venture to write these lines praying to God to watch over you always.

Your servants, held in captivity,
(Signed) JUSEF JEDID.
SELIM KHALIFE.
DAOUD SULEIMAN.

Friday, May 15, 1874.

Inclosure 3 in No. 75.

Report by Mr. Dragoman Selim Meshaka.

IN compliance with the instructions received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul I this day called upon his Excellency Yawer Pasha, who directed one of his aide-de-camps to accompany me to the barrack where Daoud Suleiman is to be found.

The aide-de-camp wished me to go to the barrack prison, as I had said Daoud had been under arrest for a long time past, but I explained that he was confined in another part of the building; one of the officers to whom we communicated our wish to see Daoud Suleiman understood whom we sought when I mentioned that he was the man who was a prisoner and whose chains had been removed on a former occasion through my intercession.

We found Daoud Suleiman dressed in a new summer uniform; he told us it had been supplied to him on Friday (the 15th May) and that at the same time he had been informed he was no longer under arrest. He told the aide-de-camp he had been kept confined two months and twelve days, and that the imprisonment had brought on spitting of blood. Several of the officers in the barracks admitted the correctness of Daoud's statements.

When we returned to the Mouchir, the aide-de-camp was inclined to make light of the imprisonment of Daoud Suleiman, who, he said, might have been kept under watch to prevent him deserting, but I repeated the above facts to Yawer Pasha, and the aide-de-camp was obliged to confirm them. The Mouchir regretted the man had not been allowed to desert. I told his Excellency, Daoud had never had the intention to desert, as he was quite prepared to share the fate of his two fellow Christian soldiers who have not been imprisoned.

(Signed) SELIM MESHAKA.

Damascus, May 16, 1874.

No. 76.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 12. Political.)

My Lord, *Beyrout, May 20, 1874.*

ON the 16th instant I had the honour to receive your Lordship's telegram of the previous day, but which, through errors in the transmission, I was only able to partially understand (I send the original as I received it), so that after trying in vain for twenty-four hours to make it out, I sent, on the 17th instant, a telegram to that effect, requesting that you would cause the telegram to be repeated, and I duly received yesterday the second, which was quite intelligible, and instructed me to furnish your Lordship with a statement of the real state of the matter concerning the three Ansairiyeh Christians detained as recruits at Damascus.

To this I replied by telegraph, to the effect that I did not think any fresh evidence of any importance, in addition to that which had already been laid before your Lordship, could be obtained, and that I felt convinced of the truth of what has been reported on the subject.

The facts of the case are simple enough, and are as follows:—

1. These men are undoubtedly Ottoman subjects.

2. They are sons of Ansairiyeh parents, a tribe, although not Moslem, liable, as non-Christian, to military service.

3. They are brought up from childhood as Christians in the schools of the missionaries at Lattakia.

4. On reaching years of discretion, they make a public declaration of their faith as Christians.

5. The authorities always considered them as Christians, and received from them the tax for exemption from military service which is paid by the Christian subjects of the Porte.

6. They were employed as teachers in the schools of a Christian mission.

7. While in the peaceable exercise of their profession, they were seized by the Turkish authorities, torn from their families, and treated with much unnecessary harshness, cruelty, and brutality, under the alleged pretence of their having evaded the conscription.

8. They were sent to Damascus as felons to be enrolled as recruits in the army, and it was at this point, when the circumstances were reported to me, that I first interfered in the case.

9. During the last eight months they have been kept at Damascus, where they have been subjected to a course of ill-treatment, in order to force them to renounce the religion they have always professed, and to embrace Islamism.

10. Up to the present time, they appear to have resisted all efforts made for their conversion, to have refused to take any part in the religious observance of the Moslems, and to have remained firm in their faith.

These, as far as I can ascertain, are the true facts of the case.

The Ottoman authorities allege that these men, being Ansairiyehs, are liable to the laws of conscription, which cannot be denied, if the events subsequent to their birth are not taken into consideration, viz., their Christian education, their public profession of that religion, and the official acknowledgment by the authorities of them as Christians, of which, I believe, evidence exists.

If the question of their parentage alone is considered, then, no doubt, the Ottoman Government is right in the view they take of the case, and we (I in particular) are wrong for having interfered in the matter, though it must appear singular that they were not called upon earlier in life to perform their military duties to the State, and that the authorities exacted from them the military tax.

But I maintain, and I respectfully venture to hope that your Lordship will share my views, that the political status of these men has been entirely altered from what it was at their birth by what happened afterwards, and that they are fully entitled to the same rights and privileges as the Christian born subjects of the Porte, which does not appear ever to have disputed the fact of their Christian education, and continued profession of that religion.

The whole question resolves itself into this:

Is the son of non-Christian parents who has been brought up and educated from childhood in the Christian faith, to which he has adhered in manhood, to be considered and treated as a Christian; or is he to be considered as belonging to the sect of his

parents against his own mature convictions? If the latter view is taken, all the promises of liberty of conscience are not worth the paper they are written on.

I trust, however, that your Lordship will not conclude that I am in favour of wholesale and indiscriminate proselytism, which I consider as opposed to public policy as it is to public morality, as I believe that many would profess and call themselves Christians, in order to gain some worldly end, and were it known that all who declare themselves of the faith of Christ are to be exempted from service in the army, the whole tribe of Ansairiyeh, as well as members of the non-Christian tribes in Syria, would make the declaration, and, ostensibly, it is a fear of something of this kind that causes the Ottoman authorities to show so much reluctance in yielding in the present case, which I sincerely believe to be one of real conviction, and of persecution for faith's sake, and, therefore, a kind of test of the principle of liberty of conscience.

I will not trouble you with any lengthened remarks on the imprisonment and ill-treatment of these unfortunate men, which are so strenuously denied by the authorities at Constantinople, whose denial is based upon reports received from interested parties, since I look upon it as a secondary question, and quite apart from that of the great question of the principle involved, though I believe that the reports of Mr. Green on this subject may be thoroughly relied upon.

In conclusion I would urge upon your Lordship that, if the view I take of the case, that these men are not liable to military service, be correct, that their release should be insisted on, and that they should be indemnified for their loss of time, as well as for the unnecessary suffering they have been put to.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 77.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,
My Lord, *London, May 29, 1874.*

I HAVE just received the inclosed letter from Damascus, which I am sure your Lordship will pardon my laying at once before you.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

Inclosure in No. 77.

The Rev. W. Wright to the Rev. J. Davis.

Dear Sir, *Damascus, May 13, 1874.*

I HAVE just heard that a despatch was sent from Constantinople to the Commander-in-chief of the Syrian corps enquiring into the state of the prisoners, if any of them had been imprisoned or ill-treated, &c. The Commander-in-chief, who is a simple, kindly man, was going to answer the truth, but the Waly, who is an exceedingly fanatical man, dictated the answer, which was to the effect that the men were well treated, and that none of them had been imprisoned or beaten, and that if these men got off, all the Ansairiyeh would become Christians. I have this information from a Moslem high in office who had to do with the affair, but privately, and I dare not give his name. The Consul knows all about it.

The Turks seem determined not to let the men go except under compulsion, and there is not the least use referring the matter to the authorities at Damascus, who will say anything to justify their past conduct. For nine months the Turks have been breaking their own laws and the Treaty of Paris with respect to these men, and nothing less than an order for their release will be effectual.

The late Government and the present Government have both recognized the gravity of this case, and yet their remonstrances seem thrown away on the rulers of Turkey.

The Waly, whose night and day companions are Dervishes, who tramp his back and put their fingers into his mouth, and are to him prophets and miracle-workers, has no more idea of England's power than the lowest savage, and he declares "the English Government is like a drum—skin and wind."

The state of the men grows more intolerable.

A few days ago it was proclaimed that all who would not engage in the Moslem prayers must eat dirt. Khalify, like Daniel, refused, and was severely beaten. Dowould Soliman is still under guard. Though nine months since his arrest, he has never been incorporated in his regiment, or received clothes or money. His chains are now taken off, but he is reduced to a mere skeleton, and for the past ten days has been spitting blood.

Almost daily the men receive blows, and they are seldom addressed except as infidels.

Khalify was promoted on account of his scholarship, but yesterday he was degraded to the ranks in the presence of the British dragoman, because he had not ceased to be an infidel. I did not think that our converts would have borne what these men have endured.

Our people meet to pray for them, and their example is likely to do much good; but it is for us to use all legitimate means for their release, and I need not say that we have full confidence in Lord Derby that he will not allow the Turks to break laws so dear to England. Most grateful are we to you for your previous assistance, and we implore you to continue to do what you can for us.

I am, &c.
(Signed) WM. WRIGHT.

No. 78.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 14.)
Foreign Office, June 1, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE to call your Excellency's attention to the case of the three Ansairiyeh conscripts, who have embraced the Christian faith, and who are said, in consequence, to have been subjected to much cruel treatment at the hands of the military authorities at Damascus.

The condition of the individuals has been repeatedly brought to the notice of the Porte by Mr. Locock, whilst acting as Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, but his representations have hitherto met with no beneficial result.

Her Majesty's Government are, however, unwilling to believe that the Porte is indifferent to the reports which reach them as to the condition of these unfortunate men, and I have to instruct your Excellency to represent to them the bad effect which is being produced in this country by the news of the treatment to which they are subjected, and which will be still further aggravated if, as seems not improbable, one of them should die in consequence.

The injury which, in that event, would ensue to the good relations of the two countries, would be deeply regretted, but could not be prevented, by Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 79.

Lord Tenterden to Dr. Macaulay.

Foreign Office, June 5, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo, relating to the Christian converts at Damascus, and in reply I am to inform you that Her Majesty's Government are making strong representations to the Porte upon the case of these men.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 80.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 7.)

(No. 22.)
Therapia, May 28, 1874.

My Lord,

I TOOK the earliest opportunity of speaking to the Grand Vizier of the treatment of the Ansairiyeh conscripts, which was, I told him, causing some sensation in England, where everything approaching to persecution on account of religious opinions was held in abhorrence.

I said that the last accounts received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul confirmed what he had before reported of these people being imprisoned and treated with cruelty, and this being contrary to the promise of toleration solemnly given by the Porte, we were entitled to protest against such proceedings.

Hussein Avni Pasha said he had not yet received the explanations that he had called for, which should be communicated to me as soon as they arrived; but in the meantime he was ready to declare that, if the men had been imprisoned, it must have been for some military offence, and not for their religion.

As exemption from military service is not a privilege granted to the Christians, although, on account of many difficulties to be overcome, the Porte has hitherto abstained from calling upon them to serve, the discharge of the three men in question cannot properly be insisted upon unless it can be shown that they have already paid the tax for exemption.

This the Grand Vizier denies, but I believe it may be possible to get the proofs of their having done so.

That many Ansairiyehs would at once profess themselves Christians if they expected thereby to evade the conscription is a most probable conjecture, and the Turks are naturally unwilling to encourage them to take such a step.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 81.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 10. Political.)
Damascus, May 30, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch I have this day addressed to Sir Henry Elliot on the case of the three Ansairiyeh Christian soldiers. I report to his Excellency a suggestion I have made to the Governor-General of Syria for bringing this question to a settlement without appearing to infringe on the professed right of the Turkish Government to exact, under all circumstances, military service from its non-Christian communities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 81.

Vice-Consul Green to Sir H. Elliot.

(Confidential.)
Damascus, May 30, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency, with reference to the case of the three Ansairiyeh Christian soldiers, that, having observed a certain hesitation on the part of Yawer Pasha to follow my advice, that he should let it be known at Constantinople that he had no doubt that the men are *bonâ fide* Christians, I called upon the Governor-General about ten days ago, and pressed the whole matter most seriously upon his attention. I told his Excellency that, although I found no difficulty in obtaining from him and from Yawer Pasha the admission that they fully believe in the sincerity of the profession of Christianity by the men, still their Excellencies' communications appear to leave the Porte in uncertainty on the subject. I urged that some means should be found to remove the colour of contradiction and opposition that our respective reports on this matter assume at Constantinople, suggesting, at the same time, that the transfer of the men to some regiment in which Christians are allowed to serve might meet the difficulty.

Halet Pasha said that this outlet had already occurred to him, but he wished first to consult Yawer Pasha and the Raïs Pasha.

Several days having, however, passed without my receiving any communication from his Excellency on the subject, I gladly availed myself of the presence in Damascus of my late Chief, Mr. Wood, Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Tunis, between whom and Halet Pasha there is a close friendship, dating from the time when both occupied posts here, to have the whole case of the men placed most clearly before his Excellency by Mr. Wood.

He assured the Vali that I was in no way exaggerating the interest that the fate of the conscripts had created in England and elsewhere, and that my most anxious wish was to prevent the Turkish authorities acquiring for their Government and themselves a reputation for disregard of religious liberty, and he concluded by warmly supporting the suggestion for the transfer of the men to the dragoon regiment stationed in the Lebanon district, which is principally officered by Christians, and is composed of men of different creeds.

Halet Pasha replied that he had, in compliance with his promise, conferred with Yawer Pasha and the Raïs Pasha, but that they had raised objections to his proposal on the score of existing military regulations. His Excellency was, however, so convinced that the solution proposed was the sole one which could permit the Porte to prove its religious tolerance, without compromising its rights, that he had determined upon addressing the Grand Vizier in this sense, and he trusted that his representation would be approved of and acted upon. His Excellency begged that this communication should be considered by me as confidential, as he feared if the Port became aware that the step had been taken in concert with me it would hesitate to adopt it, lest it should bear an appearance of concession.

Since taking the steps above reported I have had the honour to receive Mr. Locock's despatch No. 8 of the 19th instant, and I am, of course, unaware if the Grand Vizier has thought it necessary to communicate the substance of his conversation to the authorities here. Should His Highness have done so, I fear Halet Pasha may be led to modify his intentions. I would, however, most humbly venture to express the opinion that, if there is really a Turkish military Law which prevents all persons born of Ansairiyeh or other non-Christian parents to be ever regarded as Christians, the pretensions of the Turkish Government to the exercise of religious tolerance is worthless.

If Halet Pasha should, nevertheless, persevere and be successful in having his advice adopted, I think it would be prudent that no immediate attempt should be made to have the men removed at once from the Turkish army, although their transfer to a Christian regiment would amount to an admission that the position taken up by us with regard to their faith was well founded. Hereafter the Porte, having maintained the principle for which it had contended, might be induced, as an act of grace, to discharge them from the army.

As Mr. Locock has expressed a doubt whether the efforts already made on behalf of the men are likely to be attended with success, I trust the proposal I have thus put forward will not meet with disapproval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 82.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 15.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, June 13, 1874.

My Lord,

I AM desired by the Council of this Alliance to present their best thanks for your Lordship's letter of the 5th instant, and for the renewed and energetic efforts made by Her Majesty's Government on behalf of the Christian converts at Damascus.

I regret to state that since my last communication another painful case of religious persecution by the Turkish authorities has been laid before our Society, one also in direct violation of pledges given by the Sultan to England alone before the Crimean war, and also, subsequently, to the Representatives of England, France, and Austria, when assembled in the British Embassy House in Constantinople.

I beg to inclose a statement of the case for your Lordship's consideration.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

Inclosure in No. 82.

Statement respecting the Persecution of Christians in Turkey.

Case of Mustapha and his Son, at Marash, communicated by the Rev. George F. Herrick, Constantinople.

THE attention of Christian Powers has lately been called to the flagrant violation of pledges of the Turkish Government in reference to religious liberty in the case of three Christian teachers of the Ansuiriyeh tribe of North Syria; while those men still remain in durance in Damascus, notwithstanding the most earnest efforts made by Christian Governments for their liberation, there is brought to our notice another and similar case, which we are compelled to lay before you.

We feel compelled to do this with greater earnestness because in these repeated acts of persecution, occurring simultaneously with a persistent effort at the capital to hinder the circulation of the Christian Scriptures, there is manifest a spirit and a purpose on the part of the Turkish Government which challenges instant attention on the part of the Christian Powers and the Christian public of Europe and the United States.

The facts are as follows. Some time ago a Moslem, named Mustapha, became convinced of the truth as it is in Jesus, but fearing persecution, and wishing to save his family to Christ, he did not declare himself. This winter his eldest son, a bright boy, sixteen or seventeen years of age, began coming to school and church, and in the face of much opposition has stood firm as a Christian. The father himself was encouraged, and four weeks ago began coming to church, and avowed himself a Christian to any who chose to ask him. Thus three weeks passed, and we hoped that with the storm of abuse which burst upon him from the Turkish populace, the matter would be passed over. But not so. Last week, Monday evening, the father and eldest son were taken from their home by the police, and, without a moment for preparation or last words, were bound like highway robbers, and marched off under a strong guard toward Aleppo, five days' journey. They were met the next morning several hours out upon the way, their arms bound behind their backs, the son barefooted, being driven on before their guard, foot-sore and weary, but making no complaints. Meeting a Protestant Christian, they said, "Tell the brethren in Marash not to grieve for us, but to pray." And so they have gone to—what? Prison, or banishment, or death? We do not know.

The Turkish Government may say, as it has said in similar cases, that these men were arrested for their own safety. Are, then, the chains for their safety? Has the repeated beating of the Ansairiyeh teachers been for their safety? It is insisted that those teachers join their fellow soldiers in Moslem worship. Is this for their safety? Does religious liberty mean that a man may be a Christian only on the condition that he scrupulously conceal the fact? Does religious liberty mean a premium on hypocrisy? Is it not a point to be pressed, that when a man freely, and with no improper influence from without, embraces Christianity, "he shall not be molested on account of his religion," that he shall have freedom of worship, Christian communities being free to receive such men. Mustapha's civil status has not been transferred to the Protestant community, simply because that community dared not receive him.

In sharp contrast to Mustapha's arrest and cruel expulsion from the city by night, the pastor of one of the Marash churches, now in Constantinople, tells me that a few years ago the conversion of two Armenians to the Moslem faith was celebrated in those very streets of Marash by a procession, headed by the officers of Government, the converts being triumphantly escorted with instruments of music, and mounted upon horses gaily comparisoned, attended by bands of soldiers and multitudes of the Mohammedan population. This pastor was an eye-witness of that scene.

Of the case of persecution above described, Rev. Mr. Montgomery, of Marash, writes; "Mustapha has committed no crime, neither can anything be proved against him, except that he has become a Christian. It is a clear test case of the right of a Moslem to become a Christian, and should be presented as such to the Christian Powers of Europe."

No. 83.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 35.)
Therapia, June 11, 1874.

My Lord,

WITH a view of removing the Ansairiyeh conscripts from the authority of the Commander-in-chief at Damascus, by whom, if the information which has reached us is at all to be trusted, they have been cruelly ill treated, I directed Mr. Sandison to suggest to the Grand Vizier that the best course to adopt in regard to them would perhaps be to have them sent to Constantinople, where, if they should be treated with hardship on account of their religion, it will be much easier to establish the fact.

His Highness has acceded to the proposal, and will at once give orders to have the men sent here, where, although as I have before observed, the mere fact of their being Christians does not entitle them to exemption from military service, there will be a better prospect of obtaining their discharge.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 84.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Foreign Office, June 19, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant, together with its inclosure, respecting a fresh case of religious persecution which is alleged to have occurred recently at Marash; and I am to state to you, in reply, that a copy of your letter has been sent to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, who has been requested to call upon Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo for a report upon this case.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 85.

The Earl of Derby to Sir Henry Elliot.

(No. 35.)
Foreign Office, June 22, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Damascus a copy of his despatch No. 17 of the 30th ultimo to your Excellency, on the subject of the three Ansairiyeh Christian converts, and I have to express my concurrence in the suggestion made by him to the Governor-General of Syria for bringing this question to a settlement.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 86.

*Lord Tenterden to Dr. Macaulay.**

Foreign Office, June 24, 1874.

Sir,

WITH reference to previous correspondence, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that a despatch has been received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, stating that the Grand Vizier has, in accordance with a request made by his Excellency, consented to give orders for the removal of the Ansairiyeh conscripts to Constantinople, where, although the mere fact of their being Christians does not entitle them to exemption from military service, Sir H. Elliot considers that there will be a better prospect of obtaining their good treatment, and possibly their discharge.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

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* A similar letter was addressed to the Evangelical Alliance and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

No. 87.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 27.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, June 26, 1874.

My Lord,

I BEG to thank your Lordship for the letter of the 19th instant, informing me that on the subject of a fresh case of religious persecution at Marash, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has been requested to call upon Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo for a report upon this case.

I have also the honour to acknowledge your Lordship's letter of the 24th instant, acquainting me that the Grand Vizier had consented to give orders for the removal of the Ansairiyeh conscripts to Constantinople, by which step it was considered there would be a better prospect of obtaining their good treatment, and possibly their discharge.

Allow me, on behalf of the Council of this Alliance, again to thank your Lordship for the valuable services rendered on behalf of these suffering Christians. I solicit, with a confidence inspired by the past efforts of Her Majesty's Government, their persevering determination to obtain full and uninterrupted liberty for the Christian subjects of the Porte, to whom that liberty has been solemnly conceded, both by the declaration of the Sultan made to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and by the Treaty to which England and the other Christian Powers were parties. I venture to hope that the strong representations already made to the Porte, and the deep sympathy aroused in this country by the cruel treatment which these men—accused of no crime, and justly entitled to protection—have nevertheless received, may yet lead to firmer and more efficient restraints being put upon provincial magistrates, by whom, it appears, these persecutions have been committed.

It is with sincere regret that I discharge the duty of laying before your Lordship additional particulars of the treatment to which the Moslem converts at Marash have been subjected, and also a recent letter received from Damascus. The weakness or unwillingness of the Turkish Government to protect her own subjects in the possession of religious liberty guaranteed to them, and the insult which is allowed to be openly offered to the Christian faith, professed largely in her own Empire as well as throughout Europe and elsewhere, are circumstances which it is hoped Her Majesty's Government will not fail to impress upon the Porte, as not only calling for grave remonstrance, but intolerable to those Christian Powers whose continued support she needs and receives.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 87.

Mr. Montgomery to the Rev. W. Wright.

My dear Sir,

Marash, May 18, 1874.

SINCE writing you two weeks ago, another chapter has been added to the history of the converted Moslems Mustapha and his son. Mustapha's little daughter, only 9 years old, was placed in our girls' boarding school, under the care of Mrs. Cotting and Miss Williams last autumn. She is a docile child and by some misfortune has lost one of her arms. The father felt very anxious to have her, and indeed all his children, educated in Christian schools.

Last week a peremptory order from the Governor-General at Aleppo came to the local Governor here, demanding that the girl be taken from us, and put into a Moslem family. Upon the receipt of the order, I requested time to consider the matter, but the Governor here soon cut the knot by calling the mother of the girl, and forcing her to send me a request, wishing the girl delivered up to herself, and detaining her until she had done it.

The girl and the other children of Mustapha, two little boys, were then taken from the mother and committed to the hands of one of the most bigoted Moslem families in Marash, and the next morning the mother was carried off to Aleppo, why we dont know, only that she refused to be divorced from her husband because he had become a Christian.

We hear that Mustapha and his son are detained in a village three hours out from

Aleppo, probably because they can do what they like with them there and no foreign Consuls will interfere.

(Signed) G. F. MONTGOMERY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 87.

The Rev. W. Wright to the Rev. J. Davis.

Damascus, June 10, 1874.

My dear Sir,

I AM just home from Palmyra after having been absent fourteen days. I find no alteration in the state of the conscripts. I saw one of the men and he fears they are all going to be sent to Yemen. I think there is ground for this fear. I find nothing among the letters which have arrived during my absence to encourage me in believing that they are soon to be released. I trust Lord Derby will not forget that these men have rights, and that England is morally bound to see them enforced.

With our best thanks for your kind assistance, I am, &c.

(Signed) WM. WRIGHT.

No. 88.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 42.)

Foreign Office, June 30, 1874.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 34 of June 22 and to previous correspondence, I transmit to you herewith a copy of a further letter which I have received from the Evangelical Alliance, relating to recent cases of alleged religious persecution in Turkey.*

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 89.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Foreign Office, June 30, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th instant, relating to recent cases of alleged religious persecution in Turkey, and I am to inform you, in reply, that a copy of your above-mentioned letter will be communicated to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I am, &c.

(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 90.

The Rev. W. Johnston to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 3.)

Malvern, July 1, 1874.

My Lord,

I BEG to acknowledge your communication of the 24th ultimo, relating to the Syrian conscripts, and to express the warm gratitude of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for the active measures taken by the Government for their release.

In the hope that these measures may be crowned with early and complete success, I remain, &c.

(Signed) WM. JOHNSTON.

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* No. 67.

No. 91.

The Rev. I. Bliss, D.D., to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 4.)

Turkish Missions Aid Society, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, July 3, 1874.

My Lord,

I SHOULD not have ventured to call on your Lordship to-day, but for the suggestion of gentlemen connected with the English and American Embassies at Constantinople, and also of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, whom I had the pleasure of seeing yesterday. The present is a crisis in our great Bible work in the Turkish Empire. Our hope has been that the British Government would hold the Turkish Cabinet to its pledges in regard to religious liberty in the Ottoman Empire. I trust your Lordship will pardon the length of the papers which accompany this note. I shall be most happy to give your Lordship any further information that may be desired on the matters referred to in the accompany documents.

I am, &c.

(Signed) ISAAC G. BLISS.

No. 92.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 50.)

Therapia, June 22, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE at different intervals received instructions to endeavour to obtain the fulfilment of the promise of the late Fuad Pasha for a grant of land to the Syrian schools, and very shortly before I left Constantinople in January last I urged the matter again upon the consideration of the Porte.

Upon my return I found that a communication had been made to Mr. Locock through Mr. Pisani to the effect that the Porte had resolved to refuse to make the grant.

As there has been of late too much disposition on the part of the Porte to repudiate the engagements that they have made I thought it inadvisable to pass this instance of it without comment.

I therefore addressed the inclosed note to Aarifi Pasha, which, after reading to him, I put into his hands this morning. His Excellency appeared somewhat disconcerted, but answered nothing, except that he was very superficially acquainted with the question.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 92.

Sir H. Elliot to Aarifi Pasha.

Therapia, June 21, 1874.

Sir,

UPON my return to Constantinople I was informed by Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires that the grant of land to the Syrian schools, respecting which communications have for some time been exchanged between Her Majesty's Embassy and the Sublime Porte, was definitively refused.

Your Excellency will believe that I do not for a moment dispute the right of the Sublime Porte to decide with perfect freedom on all matters of internal administration; but in this case it seems to have been forgotten that the question was, not whether it was desirable to endow these schools with a grant of land, but whether a promise, distinctly given and more than once repeated to Her Majesty's Embassy, should be carried out.

Knowing your Excellency to be as anxious as myself that the relations between Her Majesty's Embassy and the Sublime Porte should continue on that footing of cordiality which is only possible when mutual confidence prevails, I am satisfied that, now that your Excellency has been made aware of the engagement taken by your illustrious predecessors, you will not permit it to be repudiated.

I avail, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 93.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 51.)

Foreign Office, July 7, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your Excellency's despatch No. 50 of the 22nd ultimo, together with its inclosure, respecting the promise made by the late Fuad Pasha of a grant of land to the Syrian schools, and I have to convey to you my approval of the note addressed by your Excellency to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 94.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 10.)

(No. 65.)

Therapia, June 30, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE received your Lordship's despatch No. 222, instructing me to call for a report from Mr. Consul Skene upon the case of the man Mustafa recently converted to Christianity at Marash.

The circumstances as they have been represented to your Lordship by the Evangelical Alliance were made known to me, as well as to his own Minister, by the Rev. G. Herrick, the American missionary whose letter forms one of the inclosures to your Lordship's despatch.

My colleague is, I believe, debarred by his instructions from in any way interfering in such cases, but I at once represented unofficially in the proper quarters that if the facts were at all as represented it would be a monstrous violation of the religious liberty formally promised to all the Sultan's subjects.

I also telegraphed to Mr. Consul Skene for any information he could give me upon the case, and I have the honour to inclose copy of his report.

I was subsequently informed that the man, accompanied by the greater part of his family, had arrived here, and that they, or at all events he, remained in prison.

In answer to the protests which I again repeated against the treatment of a man as a criminal simply because he professed the Christian faith I received assurances that if it had been done it was entirely without the sanction or knowledge of the superior authorities, and that the case should be investigated and remedied.

Aarifi Pasha said that Mustafa had been removed from Marash for his own security, and that as his appearance there would almost certainly be the signal for disturbances among that fanatical population, it was not desirable that he should be allowed to go back there at present.

As I believe these apprehensions to be well founded I did not urge his being allowed to go back there; but I strongly insisted that one of the daughters, who was separated from the rest of the family and kept at Marash, should be sent to join them. Mustafa, with his wife and children, with the exception of that daughter, have now been sent to Smyrna with orders to remain there.

This order is, in itself, in my opinion, unjustifiable, and I have not failed to say so at the Porte, where I have represented that if it is not expedient that the convert should live at Marash, there is no pretext for denying him complete liberty in fixing his residence in any other part of the Empire.

I was waiting to see the effect of these representations before reporting the case to your Lordship.

I regret to be constrained to add that there seems now to prevail at the Porte an impression that patriotism is best shown by the abandonment of the system by which, till Turkey lost her most illustrious statesmen, it was hoped to bring the Empire into harmony with the Powers of Europe.

It seems now to be considered that, as in former times Turkey sufficed for herself, she can do so again, and can be indifferent to the opinion of Europe. In the matter of religious toleration there is distinct evidence of this temper. The treatment of the Ansiriyeh conscripts is one instance, and one which could not have occurred in the time of the lamented statesmen to whom I have referred. Impediments have of late been thrown in the way of the hawking of the Scriptures in Turkish, and I am assured that

measures are even in contemplation for restraining the sale of the Bible in Turkish even in the central depôts.

I have begged the Minister for Foreign Affairs to examine carefully the correspondence of Her Majesty's Embassy on this subject, which he will find in his Department, before such a false step is taken, and I hope it may still be arrested, but the spirit which would dictate the backward course undoubtedly exists.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 94.

Consul Skene to Mr. Locock.

Aleppo, May 20, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to you, that a great sensation has been created at Aleppo, by the arrival of a certain Mustapha Oglon Ali, who was reported to have been brought in chains from Marash, for no other cause than his having abjured the Mussulman faith, and become a Christian. I received a telegram from the Armenian Protestant pastor at Marash, requesting me to do what I could for him; and I communicated the purport of this telegram to the Governor-General, who assured me that the current reports on the subject were exaggerated, no chains or ill-treatment of any kind having been used, and the instructions of the Porte having been received to send the man to Constantinople; adding, that he had kept him at the village of Heilan, on the road from Marash, in order to obviate any possible disturbance amongst the Mussulman population of this city if he should enter it.

I found, on inquiry, that three Armenian Protestants of Aleppo had gone to Heilan to see the prisoner, and I sent for them. Two of them came to me at once, and stated that the man was kept chained; but the third, who came afterwards, said that he was not in chains. I sent again for the two others, who admitted that they had not seen any chains; but alleged that the policemen in charge of the man had told them of chains being put on him at night.

The case will, of course, be fully examined at Constantinople on his arrival there; and I have thought it right to lay before you all the information I have been able to obtain here on the subject, as I am aware of its having been made use of for the purpose of injuring the Governor-General in the estimation of the Porte; and a reference might possibly be made to Her Majesty's Embassy, with the view of procuring a corroboration or a refutation of statements forwarded by agents of other countries.

I have, &c.

(Signed) T. H. SKENE.

No. 95.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,

London, July , 1874.

My Lord,

I AM directed by the Council of this Alliance to acknowledge their best thanks for your Lordship's communication of the 30th June, and to forward you the accompanying further correspondence on the subject of the persecution in Turkey still continued.

I am also instructed to invite your Lordship's attention to Mr. Wright's view of the interpretation to be put on Article IXth of the Treaty of Peace, signed in Paris 1856. This view substantially agrees with that expressed by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe and others.

I have the satisfaction of informing your Lordship, that by the kind introduction of Lord Lyons in Paris, I had the honour of an interview last Friday at Versailles with his Excellency the Duc Decazes. The interview was most gratifying; the Duc having heard my statement of the whole case, replied that he had listened to the statement with interest, and that the cause pleaded by the Evangelical Alliance received his warmest sympathy. Had the interview taken place the day previously, he would have taken the occasion of a despatch forwarded to Constantinople to insert a letter on the subject to the Representative of France, but would do so on the very next occasion;—there was, unfortunately, a clause in the Treaty of Peace, referring to the Hatti-Humaioun, which

hindered the Contracting Powers from interfering in the carrying out of its provisions; but seeing that the clause was an expression of good faith on the part of European Powers in the Turkish Government carrying out their own Charter of religious liberty to the Turkish subjects, it was not to be allowed that the promise should now be violated; the Contracting Powers must insist on Turkey fulfilling her engagements in this matter, Turkey must be reminded of the treasure which had been spent with the best blood of of the sons of England and France for her protection; that she had participated in the benefits of Treaties of Commerce, and had been aided by European loans. Friendly nations would require that faith should be kept with them in the promises made by the Sultan, and to which they were parties. The Duc added, "Let your Government make the necessary demands on the subject, and we will support them. We will go side by side with you, and not in any way be behind hand. There is in this matter a common interest, and of which I feel the great importance. You may fully rely on me."

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 95.

The Rev. G. F. Herrick to the Rev. J. Davis.

(Extract.) *Constantinople, June* 22, 1874.

MUSTAPHA, with his wife and eldest son, were sent here and put in prison, arriving the 9th instant, on which day I saw him. The Embassies were at once informed, and informed also that Mustapha's three younger children had been taken by the local Government and put in a bigoted family in Marash. The Government deceived the Embassies with the promise of the liberation of this family, and then on the 16th instant sent them off into exile, and from information received, we expect, by to-morrow's mail, to hear of them in Smyrna. The American Minister has been distinctly and emphatically told that "conversion from Islamism is an impossibility;" that "the Hatti-Humayoun was never intended to apply to Mahomedans;" and the Grand Vizier now declares that the Government will put a stop to the printing and sale of the Bible in Turkish in the Empire. What will the British Government and people do about it?

A sub-Committee of the Evangelical Alliance has been appointed to act with the Secretary in this case, and will probably prepare a paper to send to your care in a few days.

P.S. Tuesday 23rd.—I have received word from Smyrna that Mustapha was committed to the Protestants in Smyrna after the Government had tried in vain to make him deny his religion, so that the freedom amounts, after all, to his being separated from his home and three of his children, and banished to Smyrna. You will hear from us more at length soon.

Inclosure 2 in No. 95.

The Rev. W. Wright to the Rev. J. Davis.

My dear Sir, *Damascus, June* 13, 1874.

I HAVE received your letter of the 28th May, inclosing copy of communication from the Foreign Office, dated 16th May, 1874. I have replied by anticipation to the erroneous assertions of the Grand Vizier, which form the subject of Lord Derby's communication, and so I need not now do more than say that we are prepared to prove everything we have said on the subject of the illegal manner in which the men were enrolled, and the cruel persecution to which they have been subjected. At the same time I would remind you that the characteristic attempts of the Turks to deny undeniable facts is only a decoy to draw us off from the all-important question at issue.

I have read the statement about the difficulty arising from the clause in the Treaty regarding "interference" with surprise, because it implies a misapprehension of the case.

The Russian war was brought about by the meddling of France and Russia in the affairs of the Catholics and Greeks. For the more effectually securing the peace of the Empire and of Europe, it was thought desirable to do away with these protectorates, which were always a source of peril. The object was secured when Turkey bound herself by the Hatti-Sherif of 21st February, 1856, to grant perfect religious toleration to all

her subjects. The Firman was communicated to the Contracting Powers, and became the subject of the IXth Article of the Treaty of Paris. This solemn pledge having been given by Turkey, the Contracting Parties expressed their satisfaction ("les Puissances Contractantes constatent la haute valeur de cette communication") with the Firman, and they declared that it is not understood as giving them the right to mix themselves up in the relations of the Sultan with his people. ("Il est bien entendu qu'elle ne saurait donner le droit aux dites Puissances de s'immiscer dans les rapports de Sa Majesté le Sultan avec ses sujets.") Of course, it was not understood as giving a right to foreigners to mix themselves up in the internal affairs of the Empire, but, on the contrary, to render such a right no longer necessary, for the very object of the Hatti-Sherif, in a political point of view, was to remove all grounds for foreigners mixing themselves up in the internal affairs of the Empire. The expressed understanding was in substance a promise of non-intervention, consequent on the solemn pledge given by Turkey to render their interference unnecessary, but the understanding ceases to exist when the pledges are broken which rendered the understanding possible. Had the Hatti-Sherif not been issued the Contracting Powers would never have agreed to leave the Christians of Turkey to the tender mercies of their cruel rulers: but when the Turks came forward and proposed, in the most solemn form known to Turkish law, to do all for their Christian subjects which the Christian Powers could desire, and when that promise became incorporated in, and ratified by, the Treaty of Paris, then, and not till then, did the Christian Powers come to an understanding to abstain from doing what the Turks bound themselves to do. Whatever may have been the value of the understanding arrived at by the High Contracting Powers, in consequence of the Hatti-Sherif having become an integral part of the Treaty of Paris, that understanding ceases to be obligatory as soon as the pledges are broken in consequence of which the understanding was arrived at: for we cannot suppose that the Contracting Powers would frame an Article, and then solemnly agree to consider it a dead letter. The pledge given by Turkey, and the expressed understanding of the Contracting Parties consequent upon that pledge, form the IXth Article of the Treaty of Paris. Can the pledge be broken, and the understanding remain in force? Or can Turkey openly and cruelly violate her solemn pledge, and the IXth Article remain in force? The promise, or rather understanding, of non-interference rests solely on the pledge, and when the pledge is broken or withdrawn, the foundation, or *raison d'être* of the understanding ceases to exist. The Contracting Powers agreed not to mix themselves up in the relations of the Sultan with his subjects, just because he gave them the most solemn pledge known to International and domestic law, to treat his subjects justly and rationally; but when he openly and cruelly breaks those pledges, the logical consequence is, that they will interfere on behalf of the people for whom the Firman was issued; or rather, they will insist that Turkey of herself cannot break with impunity the IXth Article of the Treaty of Paris.

On this subject the language of Mr. Gladstone is distinct and decisive. Speaking of the Hatti-Humayoun, he said, "We are entitled and bound to demand from Turkey the fulfilment of her literal engagements," and I am sure that Lord Derby will be no less decisive on this point when it is laid clearly before him.

I am, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM WRIGHT.

No. 96.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 73.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 16, 1874.

I TRANSMIT to you, for such steps as you can properly take in the matter, a Memorandum which has been sent to me by the Rev. Isaac Bliss, the Secretary of the American Bible Society, in regard to the prohibition of the sale in Constantinople of the Bible in the Turkish language. I likewise inclose a copy of the reply which I have returned to Mr. Bliss."

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 97.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. Isaac Bliss.

Foreign Office, July 16, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant, inclosing a Memorandum in regard to the prohibition of the sale in Constantinople of the Bible in the Turkish language; and I am to inform you, in reply, that your representations will be referred to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople; but his Lordship presumes that, so far as they relate to the operations of the American Bible Society, they have already been brought to the notice of the United States' Minister there.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 98.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 80.)

Foreign Office, July 18, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE to convey to you my approval of the steps which you took on behalf of the convert Mustafa, as reported in your despatch No. 65 of the 30th June last; and I have to instruct your Excellency to continue to urge on the Porte, whenever a suitable occasion shall occur, the necessity of observing religious toleration within the Ottoman dominions.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 99.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Foreign Office, July 18, 1874.

Sir,

WITH reference to my letter of the 10th of June last, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that his Lordship has received a Report upon the case of the man Mustafa, recently converted to Christianity at Marash, from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, who had already been made acquainted with the circumstances by the Rev. G. Herrick.

His Excellency lost no time in bringing the matter to the notice of the Porte, and telegraphed to Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo for full particulars. Meanwhile, the man, accompanied by the greater part of his family, had arrived at Constantinople, but still remained in prison.

Sir H. Elliot again protested against the treatment of a man as a criminal simply because he professed the Christian faith, and received assurances from the Porte that if any such treatment had taken place, it was entirely without the sanction or knowledge of the superior authorities, and that the case should be investigated and remedied.

Aarifi Pasha added that Mustafa had been removed from Marash for his own security, and that, as his appearance there would almost certainly be the signal for disturbances among that fanatical population, it was not desirable that he should be allowed to go back there at present.

Sir H. Elliot concurred in this view, but strongly insisted that one of his daughters, who had been kept at Marash, should be allowed to join her father.

Mustafa and family were thereupon sent to Smyrna, with orders to remain there. Sir H. Elliot has, however, remonstrated against this order as unjustifiable, on the ground that if it is not expedient that the convert should live at Marash, there can be no pretext for denying him complete liberty in fixing his residence in any other part of the Empire.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

P.S.—Lord Derby desires further to acknowledge the receipt of your letter (without

date), received on the 11th instant, and to add that a copy of it shall be sent to Constantinople.

No. 100.

The Rev. W. Johnston to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

Dunedin, Belfast, July 16, 1874.

My Lord,

I WROTE some ten days ago a brief note acknowledging receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 24th June, intimating that a despatch had been received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, stating that "the Grand Vizier had consented to give orders for the removal of the Ansairiyeh conscripts to Constantinople."

Whilst we all gratefully acknowledge the prompt and generous action of Her Majesty's Government, I am sorry to inform your Lordship that our Mission Board do not consider the removal of the so-called conscripts to Constantinople as by any means a satisfactory issue of this painful case.

On reference to the documents which have already been placed in the hands of the Government, you will find, my Lord, that the facts of the case are as follows:—

1. The three Ansairiyeh had been for a period of about fifteen years professed Christians, engaged as school-teachers by the American Mission, and had paid to the Turkish Government the poll tax, which, according to the law of the Empire, exempts Christians from military service.

2. They were, on the 7th of September, 1873, seized by order of the Governor of the district in which they resided; sent in chains to Jeboli, and thence in succession to Tartus, Tripoli, Beyrout, and, finally, to Damascus, the only charge against them being that they were Christian converts.

3. At Damascus cruel attempts were made by threats and promises to induce them to abandon their faith. When these failed, then they were forced to go through the formality of drawing from the ballot box, and were of course consigned to the army. Their seizure was thus illegal, and their conscription an imposition.

4. The Turkish authorities, in reply to your Lordship's urgent remonstrances, promised their immediate release in February last. Instead of fulfilling their promise, they treated the men with increased cruelty; they beat them and imprisoned them in chains for the avowed purpose of forcing them to apostatise. The latest accounts from Damascus state that their persecutions are still continued, and in consequence of the treatment one of them has now so long received, his life is in imminent danger.

5. By the Hatti-Sherif, and the Treaty of Paris based upon it, the Turkish Government gave a guarantee to the Western Powers that it would henceforth grant full religious liberty to all its Christian subjects. That guarantee it has openly violated on the persons of the three Ansairiyeh.

Such being the facts of the case, and the action of the Turkish Government involving the lives and liberties of three men, and the welfare, if not the very existence, of all mission work in the East, I speak the mind of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and of various denominations of British Christians in earnestly urging your Lordship to demand, in accordance with the Treaty of Paris, the immediate release of the so-called conscripts, and our Mission Board cherish the assurance that nothing short of this should or will satisfy Her Majesty's Government.

In this hope, I have, &c.

(Signed) WM. JOHNSTON.

No. 101.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, July 18, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE the pleasure to inform you that on Wednesday last I had the honour of an interview, through the kind introduction of Lord Ebury, with the Count von Beust respecting the recent persecutions in Syria, and the violation of the Sultan's Firman on the subject of religious liberty.

At this interview I mentioned the great obligation to which the Council of this

Alliance are under to your Lordship for the valuable efforts already made by Her Majesty's Government in this matter, and also the assurances I received lately from the Due Decazes of active support from the French Government.

His Excellency informed me that he would communicate with his Government, with a view to his obtaining their aid in support of the representations already made to the Porte by other great Powers.

I ask your Lordship's permission to inclose a statement drawn up by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, which I have his permission to publish.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 102.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 12. Political.)

Damascus, July 8, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour, with reference to the case of the three Ansairiyeh Christian soldiers, to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch I have this day addressed to Sir Henry Elliot, reporting to his Excellency that two of the soldiers are said to have deserted, and that the third, Daoud Suleiman, has once more been placed under arrest, prior to being sent to Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 102.

Vice-Consul Green to Sir H. Elliot.

Damascus, July 8, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that two of the Ansairiyeh Christian soldiers, Selim Khalify and Insef Gedid, have been missing from the ranks of their respective regiments for the last fifteen days.

A Turkish officer was sent to me on the 5th instant to inquire if the men were being harboured in the Consulate. On the following day I personally expressed my regret to the Commander-in-chief that the idea should have been entertained for a single moment that I could countenance a recourse to illegal proceedings to obtain the freedom of the men. Jawer Pasha then assured me that there could be no doubt that the two men had deserted, and that they had not been included in the drafts of Arab soldiers destined for service in Yémen. I have found, however, that his Excellency is kept so ill-informed by his subordinates of the administrative details of his army corps, that I have some hesitation in accepting his assurances as conclusive.

Jawer Pasha also told me that the remaining Ansairiyeh Christian, David Suleiman, is about to be sent to Constantinople, in conformity with instructions received from the Porte. I have since ascertained that Daoud Suleiman has been once more placed under close arrest.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 103.

The Rev. G. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

Constantinople, July 14, 1874.

My Lord,

THE inclosed copy of a letter to the Evangelical Alliance in London has been made for your Lordship's perusal, in the humble hope that the subject to which it relates may not fail of being of interest to your Lordship, as well as to the Representative of Her Majesty's Government at the Porte, to whom also a copy of the same communication will be submitted immediately.

With the highest respect, &c.
(Signed) GEO. W. WOOD.

Inclosure in No. 103.

Letter from the Turkey Branch of the Evangelical Alliance to the British Organization, in relation to a case of religious persecution and the violation of pledges by the Turkish Government in favour of religious liberty.

Constantinople, July 9, 1874.

Dear Brother,

YOU have received information of the arrest and cruel treatment of a Turk, his son, a youth of seventeen years, and his wife, who, in Marash, in Northern Syria, have lately declared themselves Christians in a public manner. The circumstances of this case being such as to make it an unequivocal test of the policy of the Turkish Government in regard to the maintenance of its guaranties heretofore given in favour of religious liberty, the Turkey Branch of the Evangelical Alliance, through the undersigned, as a Special Committee, desire to lay before the Council of the British Organization a connected statement of the facts, and invoke attention to the violation of the solemn pledges of the Sultan by the Turkish authorities.

You have already learned that the above-mentioned persons, Mustapha, Ali, and Razié, were brought forcibly to Constantinople, put in separate places of confinement, and afterwards taken under guard to Smyrna.

A narrative of the events following the attendance of the father and son at one of the Protestant Armenian churches in Marash has been written by Mustapha, and sent to us from Smyrna. This statement, confirmed to us from other sources, we give in his own words :—

Mustapha's Narrative.

"On May 3 (Sunday) a company of the people of Marash, some with clubs, and some with swords, surrounded my house, and with abusive language, said, 'Come out, and we will show you what Christianity is, and what Islam is.' I replied, 'Go and report us to the Government.' They said, 'We are the Government, and have come to kill you. Come out, and we will show you what you are coming to.' After thus threatening us they scattered to their places.

"The next day, an hour before sunset, we were summoned before the Government, and the Governor said, 'I hear you have been to Christian worship; why have you done so?' I answered, 'Simply because I have accepted Christianity.' Then he exclaimed, 'Carry this fellow off;' and I was taken to prison, and my son with me.

"In the prison certain rich men called me to them, and said, 'We will each give you some thousands of piastres, and agree to supply any want you have, if you will come back to your old faith.' This offer they made repeatedly. We replied, 'We have not accepted the gospel for gold or silver, or any such thing, but simply because we hope for salvation in this faith.'

"Meantime, all those in the prison said, 'These hogs are fit only to be butchered;' and they spat upon us and insulted us until midnight.

"About an hour after midnight our hands were bound behind us, and we were driven off on foot before three armed horsemen a distance of 100 miles, to a village six hours from Aleppo. There we were met by five horsemen and a regimental scribe, an equal number having been sent off on another Marash road. The men who had us in charge brought us to where the scribe was waiting, and he then said: 'What is this you are doing? We have never heard of such a thing as this. My son, these Protestants are accustomed to give 10*l.* to each convert. If you have received this money give it back, and the Government will give you double. Come, give this thing up.' We replied: 'We cannot accept any such thing. Man does not live by money or other things of that sort, but by the Word of God.' The scribe answered, 'Go back to Islam, and I will make you a sergeant, and I will keep your son Ali in my service at 5 livres a month.' 'Sir,' we said, 'we cannot accept your offers. We receive the gospel, we do not accept money.'

"The scribe soon mounted his horse and left for Aleppo. An hour after we left and went to a place called Erymeydan, just out of the city of Aleppo. There two of the police met us and ordered us to halt. Two hours before sunset two horsemen and a Lieutenant came up, and the officer said harshly, 'Get up.' I said, 'Where are you going to take us?' Again he said harshly, 'We are going to kill you,' and then drove us before him. On the way the Lieutenant said, 'Don't persist in this. I will give your son my horse, worth 5,000 prs.; mount him and go.' We refused his offer, and they drove us on to a village called Haylanbeghnzer, two hours' distance from Aleppo. There

they put our feet in fetters, and imprisoned us under the care of five armed men, and we were exposed to the abuse of the people of the village.

"The scribe of the Mufti of Aleppo came, and with his help my son made out a petition, in which I declined to answer questions there put to me by persons from Aleppo, but asked to be brought before the Governor, where I was ready to answer. The next day the Mufti of Aleppo brought Ali to his garden, near the village, and said, 'My son, we are going to kill you; you will be sorry for this afterwards.' Ali replied, 'Sir, I accept the will of God. Do what you will.' Then the Mufti said, 'Take this traitor to the Pasha.' The Pasha, however, did not bring him before him, but ordered him to be conducted back to his father.

"There we remained imprisoned thirteen days, and at midnight a captain came and took off the fetters from our feet. Early in the morning they brought my wife from Marash, the Governor there having seized my other three children and kept them in Marash. We were all mounted on animals, and sent off under guard of a sergeant and five soldiers. In answer to our inquiry, they told us we were going to Stamboul.

"We missed the Turkish steamer at Alexandretta, and after being imprisoned eight days there we were put on board a Russian steamer and taken to Stamboul, where, without examination of any kind, we were imprisoned eleven days, and then put on a Turkish steamer and brought to Smyrna, and kept in prison until the afternoon [of June 18] when we were summoned before the Governor. The Vizirial letter from Stamboul was read to us. It was this:—

"'You are to give surety that you will not set foot in your native city; that you will not leave Smyrna; that you will come here every week and report yourself; that you will inform the Governor whatever you do; and that you will not go a half hour's distance from the city without notice here.'

"Then we found certain Protestant brethren, and lodged in the chapel. Thus, thanks to God, we have, by His grace, and with our Master's powerful aid, girded on the spiritual armour and overcome our enemies. We beg that special prayer may be offered for us.

(Signed) "Mustapha.
"Ali.
"Razié.

"*Smyrna, June 22, 1874.*"

No different version of the facts from that above presented has been made by any one. It is fully confessed that these three persons have been thus dealt with for no offence but that of renouncing Mahommedanism for Christianity. It is not pretended that they were carried away from their home in chains for their protection. Their lives were threatened, their persons abused, their liberty taken away, and now they are in banishment with no provision for their support, while the three younger children of the afflicted parents are kept at Marash in Moslem hands, solely to force the parents and son back to Mahommedanism. What adds to the gravity of these events is that this policy of persecution, it is understood, is defended by the Grand Vizier, who has declared in personal interviews with foreign Ministers that the conversion of a Moslem to Christianity is an impossible thing in Turkey.

We beg to call special attention to the significance of the fact that the Government pleads no embarrassment from the difficulty of controlling the Mohammedan population of Marash. The pastor of the church there, with which Mustapha and Ali sought connection, and who is now here at the capital, believes that no difficulty would arise from Mustapha's return thither if such orders were issued for his protection as the people should understand were to be obeyed. It is also plain that imprisonment, banishment, and deprivation of the means of living, are as glaringly in contravention of past pledges of the Imperial Government as would be the renewal of the beheading. Indeed, the death penalty is only altered in name if men may be starved and tortured out of life by barbarous treatment.

Referring to the punishment of death as applied to apostates from Islamism, the Earl of Clarendon, as English Minister of Foreign Affairs, in one of his despatches twenty-one years ago, wrote thus to Lord Stratford de Radcliffe:—"As the Turkish Empire is by Treaty stipulations to be declared part and parcel of the European system, it is quite impossible for the Powers of Europe to acquiesce in the continuance in Turkey of a law and a practice which is a standing insult to every other nation in Europe."

Again, on the 17th September, 1853, the Earl of Clarendon wrote thus to Lord Stratford:—"Her Majesty's Government distinctly demands that no punishment whatever shall attach to the Mohammedan who becomes a Christian, whether originally a

Mohammedan or originally a Christian, any more than a punishment attaches to a Christian who embraces Mohammedanism. In all such cases the movements of human conscience must be left free, and the temporal arm must not interfere to coerce the spiritual decision."

It was under the pressure of such demands, and in order to its recognition as "a part and parcel of the European system," that the Turkish Government issued various edicts of freedom and reform; and, finally, the new edifice was founded on the Magna Charta of the Hatti-Humayoun, proclaimed in irrevocable terms by the Sultan, February 6, 1856, and formally recognized by the Contracting Powers in the Treaty of Paris. This document sets forth in various forms the equality of Mohammedans and Christians, and in regard to religion says: "As all forms of religion are and shall be freely professed in my dominions, no subject of my Empire shall be hindered in the exercise of the religion that he professes, nor shall be in any way annoyed on this account. In the matter of changing one's religion, no force shall be employed." [Such is the accurate rendering of the Turkish text.]

Now this was a direct and unequivocal pledge to the Christian world, and particularly to the parties to the Treaty of Paris, that the rights of conscience should be sacredly regarded in respect to every subject of the Turkish Government. The language has no meaning, and is a delusion and a fraud if it does not guarantee to every Mohammedan the right of living as a Christian without being in any way annoyed if he choose to profess the Christian faith.

So it was received and understood at the time his Excellency Fuad Pasha, in an annex to the Hatti-Humayoun, addressed to the Ambassadors of the Allied Powers, in the name of the Sultan, stated in express terms that the provisions of that document were intended to meet the demands of the Powers to whom Turkey was under an obligation of gratitude for its salvation in the hour of peril, and used the following words:—"The Sublime Porte renews and confirms the assurances which it gave at that time (in 1843) to the Governments of France and England relative to the question of renegades. The Sublime Porte moreover declares that the decision come to at that period shall be henceforth applied to all renegades in general." . . . . Lord de Redcliffe, in a despatch to the Earl of Clarendon, commented on this as follows:—"If no one is to be molested on account of the religion he professes, and no one to be punished as a renegade, whatever form of faith he desires, I do not see what room there can possibly be for any practical persecutions in future within the limits of the Sultan's Empire."

See correspondence respecting Christian privileges in Turkey in Parliamentary Papers for 1856, pages 15, 24, 25, 33, 55, 60, 66, 67, 77—80.

The evidences of a disposition on the part of the Turkish Government practically to repudiate these pledges given as its return for the lavish expenditure of life and treasure by Christian nations in its defence, and on the ground of which Turkey has been admitted to a partnership in the European system and the privileges of Christian international law, are unhappily multiplying, and have become very threatening. It is seen in the continued grievous oppression of the three Ansairiyeh Christian teachers, whose release, often promised by the Porte, has not yet been granted. It is manifested by frequent vexatious hindrances to the erection of places of worship and school buildings by native Protestant Christians, and the circulation of Protestant publications, such as have had the sanction of the censorship for many years, and for which the regular dues have been paid at the Custom House; the manner of dealing with local authorities in such cases being often such as to show that orders obtained from the Porte are not given to be carried into execution. It is exhibited by new interferences, especially with the sale of Turkish Scriptures; the further printing of them is forbidden without special permission; and we are assured that the Grand Vizier has stated to the American Minister that the Government intends to prohibit altogether the printing and circulation of the Bible, and all parts of it, in the language and character read by its Turkish subjects.

The gaining of the solemn pledges of the Hatti-Humayoun mainly through the instrumentality of Great Britain has justly been looked upon by the Christian world as one of the brightest jewels in the crown of Britain's Queen. Will the Government and people of Great Britain allow that honour now to be lost? Shall we not again hear, in tones that will command respect in the Councils of the Porte, from His Imperial Majesty's Minister of Foreign Affairs, the declaration of the public sentiment of Christendom, and that it is impossible for the Powers of Europe to acquiesce in the disregard of Turkey's plighted faith by the continuance under the Government of the Sublime Porte of a course of action, which is in effect a revival of a law and a practice which is a standing insult to every other nation in Europe. Not retrogression, but advance in the

policy of justice, equality of rights, and a higher civilization, is the condition of order, peace and prosperity in the Turkish Empire, and the interest of all nations in their relations with it.

(Signed) GEO. W. WOOD,
ALEXANDER THOMPSON,
R. H. WEAKLY,
GEO. F. HERRICK,
Committee of the Turkey Branch of the Evangelical Alliance.

No. 104.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 76.) *Therapia, July 9, 1874.*

My Lord,

THE convert Mustafa, since his arrival at Smyrna, has given accounts of the treatment to which he had been subjected which reflect as little credit upon the authorities of the capital as upon those of the Provinces.

From inclosed statement which has been given me by my American colleague, to whom it had been sent by the American missionaries, it is impossible to avoid coming to the conclusion that this poor man has been and still is regarded as a criminal solely on account of his having adopted the Christian faith.

I have represented to Aarifi Pasha that the instructions sent to the Governor-General of Smyrna are altogether at variance with the assurances he had given me that Mustafa was not to be treated as if he had committed a crime, and I requested that orders in a different sense from those at first given should be sent to the Governor-General of Smyrna.

His Excellency has promised to do so, and I shall endeavour to ascertain the precise bearing of these new instructions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 104.

Account of what was endured by Mustafa and his son Ali, of Marash, because of their Confession of their Christian Faith.

[This is embodied in Inclosure in No. 103.]

No. 105.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 23.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, July 23, 1874.

My Lord,

I AM directed by the Council of this Alliance to acknowledge with their best thanks the receipt of a communication from your Lordship dated the 18th instant.

I am also instructed to inclose copies of letters, one from Constantinople on the subject of the persecution and banishment of Mustafa and members of his family, and one from Damascus relating to the Ansairiyeh Christians.

I would beg to call your Lordship's special attention to that portion of the memorial from Constantinople which deals with the statement made by Aarifi Pasha to Her Majesty's Ambassador, that Mustafa had been removed from Marash for his own security, a statement inconsistant with the cruel usage and imprisonment to which he had been subjected and with the Vizirial Order not to leave Smyrna, against which Sir Henry Elliot has most properly remonstrated.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 105.

Letter from the Turkey Branch of the Evangelical Alliance, July 9, 1874.

[See Inclosure in No. 103.]

Inclosure 2 in No. 105.

The Rev. W. Wright to the Rev. J. Davis.

Damascus, July 5, 1874.

My dear Sir,

YOUR letter of the 12th June, containing note from the Foreign Office, to hand.

I regret that the Turks have succeeded in driving Yousef Jedid and Selim Khalify to desert. They have been missing for ten days, and as the authorities made no inquiries about them, I feared that they had been sent off to Yemen (and probably they have been). Yesterday I saw Dawoud Suliman. He told me he believed they had deserted, for they were in great terror. Khalify had been promoted, and again degraded, because he was a Christian. When he still adhered to the statement that he was a Christian, he was told to prepare to be hanged. As a preliminary, he was told to eat dirt, &c. Jedid was being also ill-treated. While this treatment was being persevered in, every facility was given them to desert, and though they escaped on the 25th June, no inquiries were made about them till the 5th July, ten days after their escape. It was the custom to let them go about under a guard. How, then, did they for once let them out alone, and made no inquiries about them for ten days? Mr. Green had an interview with the Mushir this morning, and told him that "Yousef Jedid and Selim Khalify had been reported to his Excellency as deserters. The other Ansairiyeh conscript, Dawoud, is about to be sent to Constantinople in conformity with orders received from the Porte."

Mr. Green writes me, under the same envelope that incloses this official news, "I hear Dawoud is in prison."

They will do everything short of taking his life to make him desert too. They may just go a little too far, for I guarantee that Dawoud will not desert. I had a long conversation with him yesterday, and he seems resigned to the will of God, and that you are working for him. He recognizes the value of the services he may be rendering to his country by holding firm. Dawoud is the man who has suffered most, and the one that I have had most confidence in. We must not leave him, nor slack our efforts, for he is not responsible for what the others have done. Besides, it is not certain that they have deserted, nor would desertion, though a blunder, be a crime under the circumstances.

I think, however, their desertion settles the question of their hard treatment. If they had been fairly treated, as the Turks allege they have been, they would not have taken so grave a step as desertion, when their friends here and elsewhere were working for their deliverance, and when they had a prospect of a speedy deliverance.

I hope you got my letter on the Hatti-Sherif and Lord Derby's difficulty.

Hoping that our labours in this matter shall not be in vain, I am, &c.
(Signed) WM. WRIGHT.

No. 106.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. G. W. Wood.

Foreign Office, July 25, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, inclosing copy of a communication addressed by yourself and others to the Evangelical Society in London, relative to recent cases of alleged religious persecution in Turkey.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 107.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 13. Political.)

Damascus, July 12, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the copy of a despatch sent by me this day to Sir Henry Elliot, and reporting to his Excellency that the remaining Ansairiyeh Christian soldier has already been dispatched to Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 107.

Vice-Consul Green to Sir H. Elliot.

Damascus, July 12, 1874.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 8th instant, I have the honour to report that the Ansairiyeh Christian soldier, Dawoud Suliman, has already been dispatched from this for Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 108.

The Rev. W. Johnston to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 27.)

Belfast, July 25, 1871.

My Lord,

I HAVE been directed by the Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to submit, for the consideration of your Lordship and the Government, the following statement in relation to the Syrian conscripts, which has just been received from the Rev. William Wright, our missionary at Damascus, a sincere friend of the prisoners, and one on whose statements the utmost confidence can be placed:—

"*Damascus, July* 7, 1874.

"I am sorry to have to announce two of the conscripts missing. I feared they were made away with in some manner; but the one who remained, Dawoud Suliman, tells me he thinks they have deserted.

"Of late Lord Derby has been pressing the Turks hard to let these men free. The Turks are now anxious to be rid of the men in any way they can, so that they have not to concede the principle of religious toleration. Khalify was again promoted, and again degraded, because he was a Christian. When he continued to declare himself a Christian, his officer told him 'to prepare for hanging.' As a preliminary, the Christian dog was to eat dirt, &c. Yousef Jeded was at the same time cruelly treated, and facilities were given them to desert.

"They went on the 25th June, and no inquiries were made about them till the 5th July, ten days. The Commander-in-chief told the Consul yesterday, 6th July, that Dawoud Suliman would be sent up to Constantinople to have his case decided, but the same evening the Consul heard that Dawoud was in prison.

"Evidently the Turks will use every means to make Dawoud desert also, but I am confident he will hold firm, and it is just possible they may carry their cruelties a little too far.

"If he goes to Constantinople some one must go with him to protect him. I hope the Rev. J. Beattie may be induced to go. If not, it is possible I may have to go. It will not be an enviable mission for whoever goes; but if we could save the man, and secure the principle, it would be an enormous gain for the Empire. I know the case best, and would have most influence in Constantinople, as I know most of the English Mission, and Sublie Pasha, of the Privy Council, is a great friend of mine; but Beattie knows the man best, and he should go."

Thanking you, my Lord, for the prompt and continuous attention you have given to this important case, and hoping you will demand and secure their immediate release,

I remain, &c.

(Signed) WM. JOHNSTON.

No. 109.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 98.)

Foreign Office, July 31, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE to convey to you my approval of the representations which you made to Aarifi Pasha with reference to the ill-treatment of the conscript Mustafa, as reported in your Excellency's despatch No. 76 of the 9th instant, and I have to instruct you to continue to urge upon the Porte the better treatment of this person, and that his children should be restored to him from Marash.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 110.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. W. Johnston.

Foreign Office, July 31, 1874.

Sir,

I AM desired by Lord Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th instant, communicating further intelligence from Damascus respecting the Ansairiyeh conscripts.

I am, &c.

(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 111.

Memorandum.

THEOPHILUS WALDMEIER, Missionary in Syria, formerly in Abyssinia, desires to have the honour of seeing the Earl of Derby.

July 31, 1874.

Lord Derby did not see him, but requested him to write. He wishes to enlist the sympathies of the Foreign Office in favour of a young Syriac Prince, a Christian, who is being ill-treated by the Pasha of the Lebaum, and to call Lord Derby's attention to the increase of fanatical feeling against the Christians in those parts.

No. 112.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Foreign Office, July 31, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd instant, inclosing copies of a letter from Constantinople on the subject of the persecution of Mustapha and members of his family, as well as of a letter from Damascus relating to the Ansairiyeh Christians.

I am, &c.

(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 113.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 2.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, July 31, 1874.

My Lord,

I AM instructed by the Council of this Alliance to inform your Lordship that, since the date of my last letter, further communications have been received, from which I select the following extracts:—

(No. 1.)

"*Damascus, July* 12, 1874.

"On Sunday last, Dawood Suliman was imprisoned, at 11 o'clock, in a most filthy Damascus prison. On Thursday, Salim Meshada, dragoman of the Damascus Consulate, saw him in Beyrout, on his way to Constantinople, in custody. Nothing more has been heard of the others. Some think that they have been disposed of, others that they have deserted.

(Signed) "WILLIAM WRIGHT."

(No. 2.)

"*Constantinople, July* 16, 1874.

"Yours of the 7th instant, with its inclosure, is received, and has given us encouragement. We are preparing to go to several Embassies, including the French, at the earliest day. I am sorry that I cannot report anything done or doing by the British Embassy. We have received neither answer nor acknowledgment to our four communications on the matter of Mustapha since June 6th.

(Signed) "GEORGE F. HERRICK."

(No. 3.)

"*Constantinople, July* 24, 1874.

"On Tuesday last, the Rev. Dr. Wood and myself had an interview with the British Ambassador.

"We told his Excellency we had come for information with reference to the case of Mustapha, inasmuch as we had received no reply to our repeated communications, and we desired to have somewhat to write to you. He replied, 'There is little information to give.'

"I informed Sir Henry Elliot that I had received a Petition from Mustapha to the Grand Vizier, asking for the restoration of his children. He said, 'That is a very proper petition for him to present.' I asked if he would allow his dragoman to put it into the Grand Vizier's hands. He replied, 'No, I should not wish to do that;' and added, 'Let it go directly from Mustapha.'

"Sir Henry also expressed himself strongly to the effect that it could not be demanded that Christian Turks should, like other Christians, be exempted from military service; and although he granted that Christians in the army should not be molested on account of their religion, yet he did not encourage any hope of their being free to the exercise of their Christian worship. Who shall present his petition and plead his cause, if the British Ambassador does not? Adopt the positions of Sir Henry, and there is absolutely no hope that a Turk can hereafter accept and confess Christianity in this Empire and retain any of his rights as a citizen. He is imprisoned, banished, deprived of the means of support, torn from his family, Christian communities are not permitted to receive him, and when we appeal to the Hatti-Humayoun, we are told that that Charter does not apply to Moslems; he is enrolled in the army; and we are told on the one hand that there can be no Christianity in the army, and on the other hand that we cannot claim that the Turk becoming a Christian shall be released from the duty of military service to the Moslem State. But, surely, if a Christian Turk be made to serve in the army, other Christians should be made also to serve, and a Christian chaplain should be allowed them. The Christian Turk should be put on the same ground as other Christians.

"Our printing of the Bible remains arrested. The Government will prevent both printing and sale of the Bible in Turkish if it dare do so.

"We are told, officially, that two of the Lattakia teachers have deserted from the army. One is said to be here, but we cannot learn where, except that he is under strict guard. After the perfidious advice to those men to desert, given by the officers of the army at Damascus, we shall, till we hear of them out of the army, hold our own opinions as to what has been done with them.

"I know I need not tell you, after what I have written, that our hope, from human sources, is in what you can do in London.

(Signed) "GEORGE F. HERRICK."

Referring to the excuse of the Turkish Government mentioned in Sir Henry Elliot's letter to your Lordship, that imprisonment—forced removal of Mustapha and his son, were for their personal safety, I would call your Lordship's attention to the fact that the same excuse was made in 1855, and was then repudiated by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, in a despatch dated October 16, 1855:—

"The confinement of accused individuals, their removal to a distance for trial, and their temporary exile, were treated as means employed of necessity by the Government to evade the violence or to deceive the bigotry of an exasperated populace." But Lord Stratford adds, "this is an excuse which it is dangerous to accept."

The same excuse was also urged in 1864, when Moslem converts in Constantinople had been arrested, imprisoned, and removed to a distance, but subsequently restored to liberty through the interposition of Her Majesty's Government, on which occasion Earl Russell, in his despatch dated December 15, 1864, addressed to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, wrote, "I must ask assurances for the future, and if in reply I am to be told that the reference to the Hatti-Humayoun in the Treaty of 1856, and the promises made to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, have no practical value, and that neither missionaries nor converts can derive any protection from these documents, I am convinced the feelings of the English nation towards Turkey will be very seriously affected, and their disposition to defend the integrity of the Turkish Empire much abated. I must desire you to obtain from Aali Pasha assurances that religious freedom will not hereafter be assailed or restricted by the Turkish Government."

In the present instance, permit me to call your Lordship's attention to an extract from the Memorial addressed to the Council of the British Organization of this Alliance by the Turkish Branch at Constantinople, which adverts to the significance of the fact that the Government, at the commencement of the violent proceedings, pleaded no embarrassment from a difficulty of controlling the Moslem population at Marash. The pastor of the church with which Mustapha and Ali sought connection believes that no difficulty would occur from their return thither if such orders were issued as the people knew would be obeyed.

I would further ask your Lordship's careful attention to a statement which appears to have been made by some of the Turkish authorities that the Hatti-Humayoun does not apply to the Moslems.

Such a statement is clearly at variance with the explanation given at the time the Firman was issued by Fuad Pasha, on behalf of the Porte, in a note addressed to the British Ambassador. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, writing to the Earl of Clarendon, on the 12th of February, 1856, said, "I have received from Fuad Pasha the note which he had promised. Your Lordship will perceive that the Porte acknowledges and confirms its former declarations respecting renegades, and extends it expressly to all, including Mussulmans, though not mentioned by name. It is an official note, signed by the Secretary of State, and given expressly with the Sultan's sanction."

Allow me to add, in conclusion, it may be supposed, or at least hoped, that if your Lordship's instructions are faithfully and vigourously carried out by Her Majesty's Representative at Constantinople, the Porte will see that, in the interests of Turkey, as well as of humanity, the men who have suffered these grievous wrongs should be at once restored to their homes and useful occupations, under a protection sufficient to remove any fears that the intolerance will be repeated. Less than this, I would venture to remark, will not allay the painful sentiments awakened throughout Christendom by these acts of persecution on the part of Turkey, nor, I presume, will less satisfy those Powers which have united in remonstrances against the violation of a solemn engagement in which they, as well as the Turkish nation, are concerned.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 114.

The Rev. J. Rogers to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received August* 3.)

My Lord, *Belfast, July* 31, 1874.

I HAVE the honour to inclose an extract from the last letter I have had from our missionary at Damascus, touching the case of one of the unfortunate Syrian conscripts, and to invite your Lordship's attention to its contents.

Thanking your Lordship for your great kindness and expressing the hope that your Lordship will pardon all the trouble we have given,

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN ROGERS, *Convener of the Irish Mission Presbyterian Church in Ireland.*

Inclosure in No. 114.

The Rev. W. Wright to the Rev. J. Rogers.

Damascus, July 12, 1874, *Sunday evening.*

Dear Mr. Rogers,

I HAVE just heard since the morning service that Salim Dawoud was seen in Beyrout on Thursday last in custody *en route* to Constantinople. He will leave Beyrout probably to-morrow. He was imprisoned four days before leaving Damascus in a most filthy prison. The British Government should get him a fair trial.

Yours in haste,

(Signed) WM. WRIGHT.

No. 115.

The Rev. J. Martin to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 4.)

Lorne Place, Greenock, July 31, 1874.

My Lord,

I AM the British missionary to the Ansairiyeh in Turkey, and feel deeply interested in the persecuted Christians at Damascus, who are personally known to me. Permit me, therefore, to address your Lordship on the present position of the case.

From the substance of Sir Henry Elliot's despatch contained in your Lordship's letter of June 24 to the Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, it appears to me that the case is likely to be misunderstood. In no proper sense of the term can the men be called Ansairiyeh "conscripts." The time when they were apprehended was not the time for conscription; and no general conscription was taking place. These men, and these alone, were taken. At their arrest, no intimation was made to them that they were about to be enrolled in the army. On Sabbath, September 7, 1873, they were invited by the Governor of Lattakia to visit him at his tent in the mountains and converse with him regarding the mission schools. Soon after their arrival, they were surrounded by a company of soldiers and charged with embracing the Christian faith. On their refusing to renounce Christianity, they were put in chains, denied food and drink, and made to lie two nights upon the earth and stones, although food, drink, and beds were provided for them by friends. They were bound and led to prison first at Jebeli, then at Tripoli, and finally at Damascus. Enrolment in the army was wholly an afterthought. Even regular conscription in their case was inconsistent with Turkish law. Turkish law exempts from conscription Christians who pay the tax, teachers and heads of families. These men are heads of families, teachers, and were ready to pay the tax. At first, it was clearly persecution of Christians because of their Christianity; and persecution it has continued to be though the Turkish endeavour is now to set forward conscription in their own defence.

Sir Henry states that the "mere fact of their being Christians does not entitle them to exemption from military service." Their liberation is not asked for on this ground. But the fact of their being teachers; the fact of their being heads of families; the fact of their exemption tax being offered—any one of these mere facts does, Turkish law itself being witness, entitle them to exemption from military service. Besides the "mere fact of their being Christians" ought not of itself to subject them to imprisonment, unlawful conscription, or any improper treatment.

His Excellency considers that, by the removal to Constantinople, there will be a better prospect of obtaining their good treatment and possibly their discharge. The question is not one of good treatment alone; it is one of immediate release. It is not a question of liberty under conscription (so called): it is one of liberty from conscription. Illegal conscription is part of the persecution they are compelled to undergo. Conscription itself is opposed, as is plain from the three provisions above named, to their liberty as subjects and as Christians.

It seems that their removal to Constantinople is at the suggestion of Sir Henry. What benefit is to be obtained by this change, I am unable to perceive. Such a course

of procedure, implying, as it does, that compliance with the Sultan's orders cannot be secured in Damascus will tend to encourage Mahometan fanaticism in Syria and seriously retard the progress of Christianity there. Nothing short of their release without further delay and their transmission to their families from whom they were allured under false pretences can satisfy the claims of law and liberty. Their removal to Constantinople is, apparently, opposed to both.

Sir Henry is evidently aware of the cruel sufferings the men have had to endure. He had, no doubt, or should have had, full information from the British Consul at Damascus of the whole facts of the case, and must have known that the facts were contrary to Turkish representations. On December 30, 1873, a despatch was addressed to His Excellency instructing him to "express to the Porte the earnest hope of Her Majesty's Government that orders will at once be given for the release of the men, if such directions have not already been sent." In these circumstances, it is strange that Sir Henry has not adopted more vigorous measures for their liberation. Had he promptly followed out the despatches of the Foreign Office at first, the serious issues now surrounding the case would have been averted.

As I had anticipated for some time, the intolerable cruelties inflicted on these Christians have constrained two of them to seek liberty by flight. It may be that the Turkish Government will treat them as deserters from the army, whom they may punish as they please without fear of any interference from without. Legally, deserters from the army they are not. Escape from intolerance and persecution cannot be a crime. Were the remaining prisoner to escape also, this would not remove the guilt incurred by the Turkish Government through their persistent violation of the first principal of civil and religious liberty.

What is contended for by the friends of Christianity in Turkey is principally this: That Christians should not be chained, or illegally forced into the army or subjected in any way to insult and injury by any Government because of their Christianity.

Your Lordship's interest in this matter has called forth the expression of the regards and gratitude of Christian men in all countries; and it is hoped that your continued efforts for the maintenance of liberty in Turkey will speedily effect long desired and happy results.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MARTIN.

No. 116.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 7.)

(No. 109.)

Therapia, July 30, 1874.

My Lord,

MR. KIRBY GREEN has informed your Lordship of the desertion of two of the Ansairiyeh conscripts.

The third, named Daoud Suleiman, has arrived at Constantinople and is serving with one of the regiments quartered here.

The Grand Vizier engages that he shall be in no way molested, and that he shall be perfectly free to practice any religion he pleases.

The substance of your Lordship's despatch No. 14 of the 1st of June on this subject was duly communicated to the Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 117.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Rogers.

Foreign Office, August 8, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ultimo respecting the case of the Syrian conscript Salim Dawoud.

I am, &c.

(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 118.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Martin.

Foreign Office, August 8, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ultimo upon the subject of the persecution to which the Ansairiyeh Christians have been subjected, and I am to inform you that a copy of your letter will be forwarded to his Excellency Sir H. Elliot.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 119.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.[a]

Foreign Office, August 8, 1874.

Sir,

WITH reference to previous correspondence on the subject of the persecution to which the Ansairiyeh Christians have been subjected, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that a despatch has been received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople stating that Daoud Suleiman has arrived in that city and is serving with one of the regiments quartered there, and that the Grand Vizier engages that he shall be in no way molested, and that he shall be perfectly free to practise any religion he pleases.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 120.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Foreign Office, August 8, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ultimo communicating further intelligence from Damascus and Constantinople respecting the persecution of Christian converts in Syria, and I am to inform you that a copy of your letter has been communicated to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 121.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 14.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, August 13, 1874.

My Lord,

I AM instructed by the Council of this Alliance to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, and to present to your Lordship their best thanks for your very valuable, and, in part, effectual efforts for the protection of them who have been so wrongly and so cruelly interfered with in their religious privileges.

I am informed that the two Ansairiyeh conscripts who escaped from Damascus, after seventeen days wandering through the mountains, reached their homes on the 12th of July last. It is to be hoped that they will be allowed to remain unmolested and to resume their useful occupations.

May I also solicit your Lordship's continued kind offices on behalf of Mustapha and his family, who still remain in banishment at Smyrna.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

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[a] A similar letter was addressed to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

No. 122.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 13.)

(No. 14. Political.)

Bludan of Damascus, July 28, 1874.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my political despatch No. 12 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith the copy of a despatch I have this day had the honour of addressing to Sir Henry Elliot, reporting to his Excellency the arrival of the two missing Christian soldiers in the Ansairiyeh mountains.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 122.

Vice-Consul Green to Sir H. Elliot.

Bludan of Damascus, July 28, 1874.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 18th instant, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that I have been informed confidentially that the two missing Ansairiyeh Christian soldiers have arrived in the Ansairiyeh mountains, where they are being sheltered by their fellow-clansmen.

The person who gave me this information requested that it should not be communicated to the Turkish Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 123.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Foreign Office, August 15, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your further letter respecting the Ansairiyeh conscripts, and expressing the hope that continued efforts will be made on behalf of Mustapha and his family, and I am to inform you in reply that a copy of your letter will be sent to Sir H. Elliot.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 124.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 28.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, August 27, 1874.

My Lord,

I AM instructed by the Council of this Alliance to inform you that recent communications have been received from Constantinople on the subject of the religious persecutions, from which, unhappily, the sufferers do not appear to have been relieved.

The Rev. G. F. Herrick desires me, on behalf of the Committee of the Turkish Branch of the Alliance, to express their high appreciation of the interest your Lordship has kindly taken in this matter; and they earnestly solicit a continuance of efforts on the part of Her Majesty's Government until the Moslem converts are set free and made secure in the privileges to which, by Royal edict, they are entitled. The Committee in Constantinople desire me to express to your Lordship their opinion that in the cases both of the Ansairiyeh Christians and of Mustapha and his family the pledges of the Turkish Government have been flagrantly violated; that the rights of those of its subjects who have accepted the Christian faith have been trampled on; and that the protests and remonstrances of Her Majesty's Ambassador have been, on material points, unheeded. They respectfully submit that the principles of religious liberty, which Great Britain is especially expected to defend, requires nothing less than the restoration of Mustapha and

his family to all their rights, including their right to live as Christians at Marash, and the discharge of Dawoud, and his return to his own native land, with protection for himself and his Christian companions, and that to demand anything less than this would form a very dangerous precedent.

Relying upon your Lordship's favourable consideration, I have, &c.

(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 125.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 128.)

My Lord, *Therapia, August 16, 1874.*

HAVING received a letter a few days ago from Mr. Beattie, one of the missionaries, expressing his wish to be allowed to see the Ansairiyeh convert soldier, I asked the Grand Vizier whether there would be any objection to his doing so, when His Highness said that Mr. Beattie was perfectly free to see him, and that the Ministry of War should be so instructed.

I informed Mr. Beattie of His Highness's answer, and it was not till afterwards that I learnt that I had made the application on behalf of an American subject, who had no occasion to appeal to Her Majesty's Embassy, instead of to the distinguished Representative of his own Government.

The Grand Vizier told me on this occasion that the man seemed contented, but that, if he or his friends desired it, he might obtain his discharge by providing a substitute, the cost of which would be about a hundred Turkish, or ninety English, pounds.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 126.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 129. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Therapia, August 16, 1871.*

THE letter of the Evangelical Alliance of the July, signed by Mr. Davis, reports the language of the Duc Decazes in reference to their application in reference to what is regarded as the religious persecution going on in Turkey.

In consequence of instructions received from his Excellency, the French Ambassador called upon me last week to say that he had been directed to offer his co-operation in any steps which I might be taking with regard to the cases which had recently occurred.

I give my colleague the fullest credit for a sincere wish to second me in any efforts in favour of the converts; but, knowing his anxiety that the proceedings of the Porte in regard to the Armenian Church might be regarded as a case for the intervention of the guaranteeing Powers, I felt convinced that he would not be sorry if he found a precedent in which Her Majesty's Embassy seemed to be setting an example of interference.

I therefore simply told him what had occurred with regard to the convert Mustafa and the Ansairiyeh conscripts, and said that I had urged the Porte to protect them from persecution on the part of the local authorities.

The Duc Decazes' language reported in the letter which has been forwarded to me so fully confirms this view that it is well worthy of attention.

His Excellency's regret that, by the terms of the Treaty, the Powers should be debarred from interfering between the Sultan and his subjects, is stated precisely as I have often heard Count de Vogüé express himself; and it is impossible to doubt that they would both gladly see disregarded a clause which I believe to be most essential in preserving us from complications.

With this disposition prevailing, your Lordship will concur with me in considering it necessary to be very cautious in the manner of calling the attention of the Porte to the grievances in which our assistance is invoked by Turkish subjects.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 127.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 130.)

My Lord, *Therapia, August 16, 1874.*

WITH reference to the convert Mustafa of Marash, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the Grand Vizier states that he is now left perfectly free, with the exception of not being allowed to return to Marash.

I have not, however, succeeded in getting those of his children who were left at that place sent to join him.

In this respect the Porte might, I believe, plead the example of various European Governments in cases where the parents of children abjure the religion of the State.

There has of late been some bad cases in regard to the treatment of converts, but there is, in my opinion, nothing that can properly be regarded as a general religious persecution, such as might be inferred from the tone of the correspondence of the Evangelical Alliance, which was inclosed in your Lordship's despatch No. 106.

The Turkish law sanctions the profession of all religions, but it does not tolerate proselytism, which is undoubtedly the aim of many of the missionaries; and the dislike with which their proceedings are viewed is visited upon their converts.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 128.

Mr. Lister to the Rev. J. Davis.

Dear Sir, *Foreign Office, August 31, 1874.*

I INCLOSE the paper which you put into my hands and which Lord Derby has returned to me. It must rest with your Society to decide whether the communication should be made official; but his Lordship desires me to tell you that, if it is made official, it must be sent to Sir H. Elliot for his reply; and that, if it is not so communicated, the matter must simply drop.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 129.

Mr. Lister to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September 1, 1874.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your further letter of the 27th ultimo, urging the continued efforts of Her Majesty's Government on behalf of the sufferers from religious persecution in Syria, and I am to inform you, in reply, that a copy of your letter will be forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 130.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 11.)

(No. 171.)

My Lord, *Therapia, September 2, 1874.*

WITH reference to my previous despatches about the Ansairiyeh soldier I now forward to your Lordship a further correspondence which I have had with the Rev. Mr. Herrick, who complains that he had been prevented from seeing the man.

At the same time that I declined to press the demand of an American subject, I informed the Rev. Dr. Thompson, the Agent of the Bible Society, who had interested himself in the case, that, if he wished to see the soldier, I should be ready to assist him if he found any difficulty placed in his way.

It appears that Dr. Thompson subsequently presented himself at the Ministry of War and asked for the man, who was produced without hesitation.

He made no complaint of his treatment, and said that he had a Testament; but the interview took place in the presence of an officer, before whom it is possible that he may have been afraid to speak.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 130.

The Rev. G. Herrick to Sir H. Elliot.

River Hissar, August 21, 1874.

Your Excellency,

IN accordance with your direction to inquire at the Seraskeriat for permission to see Daoud Soleyman, and assured by the Grand Vizier, through your Excellency, that such permission would be readily granted, I lost no time in applying as directed.

After several unsuccessful efforts I yesterday saw the lieutenant of His Highness the Seraskier, and inquired where Daoud could be seen. The Pasha affected to know nothing whatever of the man, and said it would be difficult to find him! and, while he treated me in a perfectly courteous manner, and gave, in my presence, an order of inquiry for the man, it was very plain he did not mean business, and that I should not, in this way, obtain an interview with Daoud.

I believe your Excellency will lay some stress, after the declarations and promises made by the Grand Vizier, on the man's being actually seen and his condition ascertained by persons on whose word yourself and the Government and people of Great Britain can rely. Certainly the Committee of the Evangelical Alliance in London, to whom I am just now writing, will insist on knowing how this man is situated.

May I not be pardoned the boldness of asking you to be so kind as to direct a Dragoman of your own to press the inquiry where Daoud is and how he is treated, and secure us an interview with him.

We require to know a little beforehand when and where we can see him, so as to provide ourselves with an interpreter, as Daoud knows only Arabic.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) GEO. F. HERRICK,
Secretary, Evangelical Alliance.

Inclosure 2 in No. 130.

Sir H. Elliot to the Rev. G. Herrick.

Therapia, August 22, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your yesterday's letter, respecting the recruit, Daoud Soleyman.

As I had complied with Mr. Beattie's request in ignorance of his being a United States' subject, as I understand you to be yourself, and as there is manifest inconvenience in representations to the Turkish authorities in favour of foreigners going through other channels than that of their own Minister, I shall forward your letter to Mr. Boker, informing him at the same time of the promise which I had received from the Grand Vizier, and of my readiness to co-operate with him in obtaining its fulfilment.

With regard to the remark which you have thought proper to underline, that the Evangelical Alliance will insist upon knowing the position of this man, I must remind you that it rests with Mr. Boker and myself to decide upon the extent to which it may be proper for us to afford unofficial assistance upon a matter in which, as relating to a subject of the Sultan, we are not entitled to interfere.

I am, &c.
(Signed) H. ELLIOT.

No. 131.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 12.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,
London, September 11, 1874.

My Lord,

I AM instructed by the Council to forward to your Lordship the following extract from a letter recently received from the Secretary of the Turkish Branch of the Evangelical Alliance in Constantinople:—

"I learned from the dragoman of the American Legation this morning that the Grand Vizier had assured him that if we were now to call at the Ministry of War we should see Dawoud Suliman. Accordingly I went this afternoon, and after a little succeeded in finding him. As he does not speak the Turkish language, I could have no satisfactory interview with him; but I succeeded in finding two Protestant Armenian preachers, one knowing the English and the other Arabic, so with three languages other than Turkish we were able to have a very satisfactory interview with Dawoud in the presence of his officers.

"We found him well and suffering no abusive treatment, beyond a stricter surveillance than that of his comrades. He is known as a Protestant Christian in his regiment, and is not compelled to attend Moslem worship; he has his Testament with him and reads it. He was evidently very much cheered by our visit. We assured him of the sympathy and prayers of many Christian friends in different lands, and reminded him that he has still an opportunity of glorifying God by faithful endurance. He appeared well. It has been promised that he shall be allowed to attend Christian worship on Sunday, and we have provided for his being brought to service, and shall see if the promise is kept. I have been informed to-day that it has been suggested that Dawoud might be bought off from the army for 100*l*. I need hardly remark that this would be a 'lame and impotent conclusion' to what has been, and has still to be demanded."

I am also desired to express the gratification which the Council feel at hearing of this amelioration in the condition and treatment of one of the Ansairiyeh converts, and to thank your Lordship again for the aid rendered by Her Majesty's Government. At the same time I am requested to remind your Lordship that the forced service of Dawoud in the Turkish army is in violation of Turkish law, which exempts from conscription "Christians who pay the tax, teachers, and heads of families," and can only be interpreted as intended to deter others from exercising the right granted by Royal Firman, viz., "every subject shall be allowed the exercise of the religion he professes, and shall be in no way molested on that account."

I beg to add that tidings have not been received respecting the condition of the companions of Dawoud who escaped from the cruelties inflicted upon them at Damascus, and arrived, after seventeen days wandering among the mountains, at their native Province of Lattakia.

The Marash family continue at Smyrna banished from their home, country, and occupation, and separated from their three children for no apparent or alleged reason other than their change of religion. I am, therefore, desired respectfully to suggest that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople may be instructed to request with urgency, acting with the Representatives of Powers whose co-operation has been warmly promised, that those who have been oppressed may be restored to the enjoyment of the rights and religious privileges secured to them by Royal promise and solemn engagements.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 132.

*Mr. Lister to the Rev. J. Davis.**

Foreign Office, September 12, 1874.

Sir,

WITH reference to previous correspondence, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has been told by the Grand Vizier that Mr. Beattie, the missionary, was perfectly free to visit the converted Ansairiyeh soldier, and that the Ministry of War should be so instructed.

* A similar letter, with the exception of the last paragraph, was addressed to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

On the same occasion Sir H. Elliot was informed by the Grand Vizier that the convert seemed contented; but that, if he or his friends desired it, he might obtain his discharge by providing a substitute, the cost of which would be about 100 Turkish, or 90 English, pounds.

With reference to the convert Mustapha of Marash, Her Majesty's Ambassador reports on the authority of the Grand Vizier that he is now left perfectly free, with the exception of not being allowed to return to Marash.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 133.

Dr. Macaulay to the Earl of Derby.

56, *Paternoster Row, London, September* 11, 1874.

DR. MACAULAY respectfully and earnestly asks Lord Derby's attention to the accompanying letter from Damascus about the Turkish Christian soldiers who are suffering persecution.

The matter seems to be kept back from Sir Henry Bulwer by his subordinates.

Inclosure in No. 133.

Letter from the Rev. W. Wright (returned to Dr. Macaulay).

[See No. 136.]

No. 134.

Mr. Lister to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 17, 1874.

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, giving further information respecting the Ansairiyeh conscript Dawoud, and the Marash family, and to inform you that a copy of your letter will be forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 135.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received September* 19.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,
My Lord, *London, September* 17, 1874.

I AM instructed by the Council of this Alliance to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of your Lordship's communication of the 12th instant.

On the subject of the missionary interview with the Ansairiyeh conscript, I am desired to express the satisfaction with which the Council have heard that Dawoud, although forcibly brought to Constantinople, is no longer subject to personal ill-treatment, but is allowed to profess his Christian faith, and also that he has been promised permission to attend Christian worship.

The Council would again call your Lordship's attention to the fact, which appears to have escaped Sir Henry Elliot's notice, that the enforced military service, both of Dawoud and his companions, was from the first illegal, and therefore that in justice to them, as well as in good faith to the nations who seek to protect them, their discharge and permission to return to their homes and former occupation should be effectively urged upon the Turkish Government.

The Council have been pained to learn, from your Lordship's letter, the confirmation of a statement, privately communicated, that an offer had been made, through the British Ambassador, to obtain the discharge of Dawoud, by a money payment of 90*l*. Such a proposal, the Council are of opinion, cannot, and ought not, to be entertained. The acceptance of the offer would be a surrender of the object most earnestly contended for, viz., the right of every Turkish subject to be protected "in the exercise of the religion that he professes, without being molested therein." And it would further be a settlement by compromise of a cruel and grievous wrong on the part of the Turkish authorities.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 136.

Mr. Lister to Dr. Macaulay.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 22, 1874.

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, upon the subject of the Turkish Christian soldier who is stated to be suffering persecution; and I am to inform you, in reply, that the case is being carefully watched by Her Majesty's Government and by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

The inclosure in your letter under reply is herewith returned.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 137.

Lord Ebury to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received September* 22.)

(Private.)
My dear Derby, *Moor Park, Rickmansworth, September* 22, 1874.

I DO not know if you have seen the inclosed with its signatures, which I understand will receive a large number of additional influential names, but at all events I will send it to you with a line to say that the Council of the Evangelical Alliance are endeavouring, and we have reason to hope successfully, to induce a few persons of rank and station to undertake the presentation of it to the Sultan at Constantinople. Whatever we hope to get, indeed, that without which we cannot hope for success, is the moral support of our Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. This application will, I believe, be shortly made at the Foreign Office by Lord Alfred Churchill and Mr. Davis, the Secretary of the Alliance.

Many thanks for what you have already done.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) EBURY.

No. 138.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Ebury.

(Private.)
Dear Lord Ebury, *Abergeldie, Aberdeen, September* 24, 1874.

I AM much obliged by your letter of the 22nd, sending me notice of the memorial addressed to the Sultan, which is shortly to be forwarded officially. The object is one about which there can be no difference of opinion in Protestant countries; and, so long as there is no appearance of an attempt to establish a protectorate over the non-Mahometan population of the Turkish Empire (which would be effectually playing the Russian game), I do not see how the support of the Foreign Office can be refused.

Very faithfully yours,
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 139.

Mr. Lister to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 26, 1874.

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant, on the subject of the Ansairiyeh conscript Daoud, and to inform you that a copy of your letter will be forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 140.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 187.)

My Lord, *Therapia, September* 10, 1874.

EVER since the time when the Protestants of this country were accepted as a recognized community, they have complained of not being treated on an equality with the other Christian denominations, notwithstanding all the attempts of my predecessors and myself to support their claims.

Their principal grievances were their exclusion from the Provincial Councils, and the place assigned to their Vekeel, or head, on the occasion of the official reception of the Sultan.

The latter grievance was remedied this year for the first time, as I have already informed your Lordship.

I now learn from their Vekeel that the more important point of their representation on the Councils has likewise been conceded, and he also states with much gratitude that the community is meeting with a consideration never before extended to it.

The change is without doubt attributable to the anxiety which is now apparent at the Porte to act in a manner calculated to gain the sympathy of Her Majesty's Government.

While upon this subject I may state that the Vekeel considers that much of the jealousy with which the native Protestants have been regarded is caused by the indiscreet zeal of the missionaries, whose proselytising tendency creates on the part of the authorities an aversion which has been visited on the whole community.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 141.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 189.)

My Lord, *Therapia, September* 13, 1874.

MY views on the case of the Ansairiyeh conscripts have been so fully conveyed in my previous reports, that your Lordship will not expect from me any lengthy comments upon the letters of the Evangelical Alliance and of the Rev. Mr. Martin, which form the inclosures of your despatch No. 139 of the 3rd instant.

I will therefore only touch upon the question of their removal to Constantinople, which I had suggested, but the benefit of which Mr. Martin professes himself unable to perceive.

My motive was very simple. The men were stated to be undergoing at the hands of the military authorities in Syria a cruel persecution which I knew would not be continued at Constantinople under the immediate eye of the Porte and of the foreign embassies, and I have every reason to hope that my expectation has been realized, as no whisper has reached me of maltreatment of the man Daoud since he arrived here.

He was allowed to see the clergymen, and, in consequence of their urgent desire, I obtained the further assurance that no impediment should be put in the way of his attending Divine service, although, as I have since ascertained, there is none performed here in any language that he understands, and the value of the permission granted may, perhaps, be rated less highly than it was when the impression prevailed that it might be refused.

There can at least be no doubt that unless the treatment that Daoud was undergoing in Syria was strangely exaggerated, he has benefited in no small degree by his removal to Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 142.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 159.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 30, 1874.

I HAVE to approve the course which your Excellency pursued with reference to the requests of Mr. Herrick and of Dr. Thompson to obtain interviews with the recruit Daoud Solyman, as reported in your despatch No. 171 of the 2nd instant.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 143.

*Mr. Lister to the Rev. J. Davis.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 16, 1874.

WITH reference to Lord Tenterden's letter of the 26th September, respecting the case of the Ansairiyeh Christians, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that Sir H. Elliot in a recent despatch points out, with reference to the question of their removal to Constantinople, that the men were said to be undergoing a cruel persecution in Syria, which could not, in his opinion, be continued at Constantinople under the immediate supervision of the Porte and of the foreign Embassies. His Excellency further states that he has every reason to hope that this expectation has been realised, and that the man Daoud has not been subjected to any maltreatment since he arrived at Constantinople.

I am to add that Daoud has been allowed to see Protestant clergymen, and that at their particular request, Sir H. Elliot obtained the further assurance that no impediment would be put in the way of his attending Divine service.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 144.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 21.)

(No. 28. Political.)

My Lord, *Aleih, October* 6, 1874.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch, and its inclosures, which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, reporting an order issued in the district of Lattakia to close all schools conducted by foreigners.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 144.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Aleih, October* 6, 1874.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch which I have received from the British Vice-Consul at Lattakia, reporting that he has received an official communication from the Kaïmakam of the place to the effect that the Sublime

* A similar letter was addressed to the Rev. J. Martin.

Porte has given orders not to allow foreigners to build or to open schools, and to close all schools they may have already opened.

This order seems to me so contrary to the usual liberality and encouragement extended to the efforts of foreigners to educate the subjects of His Majesty the Sultan, that I conceive it must have originated in error or in excess of zeal on the part of the Governor of Lattakia, who may be desirous of closing the schools of the American missionaries in consequence of the action taken with regard to the three Ansairiyehs who were forcibly seized as recruits last year.

Whatever may be the origin and object of this order, I hasten to inform your Excellency of it in order that you may take such steps as you may judge necessary to get it rescinded, and to prevent its being applied to other places like Beyrout, where there exist large educational establishments carried on by foreigners greatly to the advantage of the native population.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 144.

Vice-Consul Vitali to Consul-General Eldridge.

M. le Consul-Général, *Lattaquié, le 3 Octobre*, 1874.

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer qu'en date du $\frac{1}{13}$ Septembre dernier, M. le Caïmacam de Lattaquié m'a adressé une lettre officielle pour m'informer que la Sublime Porte a donné ordre de ne pas permettre aux étrangers de construire ou d'ouvrir des écoles et de fermer toutes les écoles qu'ils pourront avoir ouvertes.

M. le Caïmacam m'ayant formellement prié de lui accuser la réception de sa susdite lettre, je n'ai pas hésité de le faire.

Il serait superflu de commenter cette décision de la Sublime Porte. Il suffit de dire qu'elle est fort nuisible pour le district de Lattaquié, où il n'y a d'autres écoles que celles des missionnaires Américains, sauf une école de l'évêque orthodoxe et l'école "Rachdié."

Dans cette dernière école les étudiants Musulmans sont seulement admis, et elle est entretenue aux frais du Gouvernement.

Je profite, &c.
(Signé) N. VITALI.

No. 145.

The Rev. T. Houston, D.D., to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received October* 23.)

My Lord, *Knockbracken Manse, Belfast, October* 22, 1874.

AS Moderator of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod in Ireland, I take leave to solicit your attention to the following brief statement and request.

From various representations which have already been presented to you by memorials and deputations from several public bodies, your Lordship has been made acquainted with the case of the three Christian converts connected with the Mission at Lattakia, in Syria, who were forcibly taken from their families, and enrolled in the Turkish army. Your interference on their behalf has hitherto been disregarded by the Turkish authorities; and one of these converts, who was some time ago removed to Constantinople, is still denied the Christian liberty which has been justly claimed for him, and is subject to indignity and maltreatment.

I may mention, as the ground of my addressing your Lordship in this case, that the Mission in Syria, with which these Ansairiyeh converts are connected, is carried on conjointly by the two Synods of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland and Scotland, in co-operation with the Synod of the same Church in the United States of America; and that the whole members of this ecclesiastical community take the deepest interest in these oppressed converts—these brethren in the faith of Christ, and regard themselves bound to employ every legitimate means to effect their enlargement.

The Commission of our Synod having lately appointed a Deputation to wait on your Lordship, in conjunction with a like Deputation from the Synod of brethren in Scotland, who will, we expect, be accompanied by Members of Parliament, and other gentlemen,

from Ireland and Scotland, I take the liberty of requesting that you will have the goodness to receive such a Deputation, and that you will be pleased to inform me at what time it will be convenient for you to admit them to an audience.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS HOUSTON, *D.D., Moderator.*

No. 146.

The Revs. W. Magill and J. Rogers to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received October* 30.)

My Lord, *Cork, October* 27, 1874.

WE had the honour to receive in due course a communication from the Foreign Office, of date September the 12th, in reference to the condition of the Ansairiyeh soldier at present in Constantinople.

From that communication we learned:—

(1.) That the Grand Vizier had stated to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, that Mr. Beattie, the missionary, was perfectly free to visit the convert, and that the Minister of War should be so instructed.

(2.) That Sir Henry Elliot was informed that the convert seemed contented.

(3.) But that if he or his friends desired it, the discharge of the convert could be obtained by providing a substitute at a cost of one hundred Turkish, or ninety English pounds.

With reference to this and other correspondence on this subject, will your Lordship permit us to make the following statement? Premising that the Foreign Office must have access to sources of information in relation to the matter not enjoyed by others, we do so with great deference, but we beg respectfully to place before your Lordship the state of affairs as reported to our Board on what appears to us good authority, to wit, that of the Rev. Dr. Thompson, of the Church of Scotland at Constantinople.

(1.) That Mr. Beattie (the convert's own pastor) though several weeks in Constantinople was never permitted to see Dawoud. We doubt not for a moment that the promise to Her Majesty's Ambassador was given, but the permission did not arrive till after Mr. Beattie had left for his home at Lattakia. Acting on the too-late concession extended to Mr. Beattie, the Rev. George F. Herrick called at the Seraskierate, "but was informed that nothing had been heard there of any such person" (as the convert), and that it might be a very difficult task to discover any such individual among the multitude of soldiers around, and that nothing could be done without orders from head-quarters.

After some time, Mr. Herrick, having called again, saw the convert, but was informed by the guard that they had no authority to permit Dawoud to attend divine worship; and so the visit ended.

On the 20th August, the Rev. Dr. Thompson, already referred to, called at the Seraskierate for the purpose of seeing Dawoud Suleiman. Wishing to present him with a copy of an Arabic Bible, "he was peremptorily informed that he could not be allowed to do so," and, that "having no authority on the subject, the officials could not permit the soldier to attend Protestant worship." This appears to us somewhat perplexing, inasmuch as in a communication dated August 8th, forwarded to us by your Lordship's direction, there occurs the following passage:—"A despatch has been received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, stating that Dawoud Suleiman has arrived in that city, and is serving with one of the regiments quartered there, and that the Grand Vizier engages that he shall be in no way molested, and that he shall be perfectly free to practise any religion he pleases."

(2.) As to Suleiman being contented, it appears to us to be difficult to get at his state of mind, seeing that he is not allowed at any interview to speak to a visitor unless in the presence of Turkish officials.

What his feelings are, however, may in some measure be gathered from a letter of his, which he fortunately got transmitted to us. Take this extract:—

"I hope that every Christian reader will remember me in his prayers to the holy God in whose hands are the hearts of kings and governors, and who searcheth the hearts and reins; and I pray to the Most High to give me patience."

(3.) As to the proposal of Turkey to liberate the soldier on condition that a substitute be provided at a cost of 100*l.*, we believe that the convert, "being free-born," would not consent to purchase his freedom, and we respectfully submit that the proposal is offensive to the religious instincts of Christendom and is an insult to the nations who, parties to a well-known contract that secures religious liberty to the subjects of the

Porte, are not likely to suffer its violation much longer. May we respectfully but firmly express the hope that England will take the initiative in presenting such a remonstrance in the proper quarter as may not be disregarded.

The question is not now whether Christians are liable to conscription, but the point is, that these men were arrested for being converts and that Dawoud, contrary to law, is undergoing penal servitude in the army for holding firm by his profession of Christianity.

Let us here remind your Lordship of the Proclamation of the Sultan formally recognized by the Contracting Powers on the 30th March, 1856, and signed by the Representatives of England, France, and Austria on the one side, and the Ottoman Ministers and a Greek Prince on the other, viz., "As all forms of religion are and shall be freely professed in my dominions, no subject of my Empire shall be hindered in the exercise of the religion he professes nor shall he be in any way annoyed on this account. In the matter of changing one's religion no force shall be employed, &c."

We have only to add that intelligence has reached us that a despatch from Constantinople has been forwarded to Lattakia ordering that the mission schools in the district be all closed.

We have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM MAGILL, *Moderator, General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.*
JOHN ROGERS, *Convener, Jewish Mission of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.*

No. 147.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 205.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, November 4, 1874.*

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency a copy of a further letter from the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland respecting the treatment of the Ansairiyeh soldiers detained at Constantinople, and I have to draw your especial attention to that portion of the letter according to which it would appear that the promise given by the Turkish authorities has not been kept.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 148.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 5.)

(No. 248.)

My Lord, *Therapia, October 20, 1874.*

I HAD yesterday a serious conversation with Aarify Pasha upon the tendency which has of late been observed to exalt the Mahommedan at the expense of the Christian element.

A difficulty which is being made about granting permission for printing the Bible in Turkish, which had been allowed twelve years ago, and a refusal to give to the Syrian schools the land that had been promised to them, had induced me to intimate to his Excellency, through Mr. Sandison, that if the answers which I had received upon them were to be regarded as final, it might be necessary for me to ascertain from the Sultan whether his Government, in departing from the principles of equality in the treatment of all classes of his subjects and in withholding the encouragement formally given to educational objects, which had enlisted in His Majesty's favour so much sympathy from the Western Governments, were carrying out his wishes.

Aarify Pasha had shown unusual irritation at this message, and declared that, with regard to the printing of the Bible, his resolution was irrevocable.

When I reverted yesterday to what had passed between him and Mr. Sandison, I said that I regretted that he should so greatly have resented the message I had sent him, but there were so many indications of a change in the manner in which Christians, whether native or foreign, are being treated, that it had become necessary to ascertain whether the views of the Sovereign had been modified in reference to them.

I had taken with me two of the latest of the Consular Reports, Mr. Vice-Consul Kirby Green's despatch to your Lordship, No. 17 of the 19th ultimo, and Mr. Consul-General Eldridge's despatch to me, No. 47 of the 25th ultimo, and I showed Aarify

Pasha from these, which I said I could supplement by many others, the distinction which is being made in the provinces between the members of the two religions.

I said I had as long as possible endeavoured to believe that it was the local authorities who were chiefly responsible for the revival of an exclusive system in the provinces, but when I found indications of the same spirit at the Sublime Porte, I could not avoid looking upon the question in a more serious light. Aarify Pasha declared that I was mistaken in attributing to the Government a spirit of intolerance; the Porte did not wish to interfere with anyone in the exercise of his religion or to molest him for it, but they saw with disapproval the insidious attempts at proselytism which are being carried on; he had already told Mr. Sandison that the question of the grant of land to the Syrian schools should be enquired into more carefully, and he laid—very possibly fairly—upon the faulty composition of his Department the blame of answers being returned to the Embassy without his being made fully aware of what had previously passed upon the subject.

This might possibly be the case with regard to the question of the printing of the Bible, for if that had really been authorized on a previous occasion, it might, perhaps, be possible to allow it again, and at all events the question should be reconsidered.

Altogether his Excellency spoke to-day in a very different spirit from that which he had shown two days before, and I am inclined to suspect that this may perhaps be attributed to the influence of the Grand Vizier, who is not animated by the strong Mahommedan feelings which he himself entertains.

I had not, at the time of holding the conversation, received Mr. Consul Eldridge's despatch No. 51 of the 6th instant, reporting the order to close all the foreign schools at Lattakia, which I shall forthwith communicate to the Minister, and endeavour to get repealed.

The schools at that place are under the American missionaries, and there is no doubt that it is the injudicious proceedings of many of that body which have been the cause of the indiscriminating order, and of the general feeling of dislike of all similar establishments.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 149.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 7.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,

My Lord, *London, November 7, 1874.*

I AM desired by the Council of this Alliance to thank your Lordship for letter dated the 16th ultimo, and to inform you that, respecting that portion of Sir Henry Elliot's despatch pointing out that the removal of the Ansairiyeh Christians to Constantinople was intended for their protection, in consequence of the alleged cruel persecution from which they were suffering in Syria, the Council instruct me to say that the statement is quite inconsistent with the communications received by them from the district in which these men were leading peaceful and useful lives. Those communications were to the effect that, when first seized and removed to Damascus, there was not any ferment or disturbance on the part of the native population, and that the sufferings these men endured arose entirely from their treatment by the local magistrates, who do not appear, up to the present time, to have been punished, or were censured, for such a flagrant abuse of authority.

The Council desire again to call your Lordship's attention to the continued banishment to Smyrna of the Marash Christians, and separation from their family, notwithstanding the remonstrance made by Sir Henry Elliot against this act of manifest injustice on the part of the Turkish authorities.

The Council would also bring before your Lordship's notice that about the time the announcement arrived by telegram in this country that it had been officially stated to the British Ambassador that "the privileges and protection accorded to all religions by the Firman of 1856 will be strictly maintained," information both public and private was being received that orders from Constantinople had been issued "for the suppression of all Protestant schools in Syria, and that the building of a Protestant school at Jaffa had been stopped." The Council venture to hope that, if Her Majesty's Government have received any official information, either confirming, modifying, or contradicting this statement, they will find it consistent with their duty to make it publicly known.

The Council are under the painful necessity of expressing their fears, founded upon the failure of the representations hitherto made to the Turkish Government, and upon the communications received at various times from the several Committees of this Alliance, that unless firmer and more effective remonstrances are made at Constantinople by the representatives of those Christian Powers to whom the Firman was communicated, not only will that Imperial edict, obtained at much cost, become a dead letter, but Christian efforts, however prudently and beneficially exerted, will be excluded from that land.

I beg, on behalf of the Council, again to thank your Lordship for the services rendered in the cause of religious liberty, and respectfully to entreat for it, in the interests of humanity, of civilization, and of national honour, the continued attention of Her Majesty's Government.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 150.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 10, 1874.

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant, respecting the present position of the Ansairiyeh Christians, a copy of which will, by his Lordship's directions, be sent to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, for such steps as he may think advisable to take in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 151.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 214.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 10, 1874.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency, for such steps as you may think proper to take, a copy of a further letter from the Evangelical Alliance respecting the present position of the Ansairiyeh Christians.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 152.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 216.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 11, 1874.

I APPROVE the language which your Excellency used to Aarifi Pasha with respect to the position of the Christians in the Turkish Empire, as reported in your despatch No. 248 of the 20th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 153.

Lord Tenterden to Mrs. G. Pringle.

Madam, *Foreign Office, November* 14, 1874.

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, and to inform you in reply that Her Majesty's Consul General in Syria reports that the schools in the Province of Lattakia have been closed by order of the Kaïmakam of that district, but no information has been received with respect to the extension of this order to other places.

I am to add that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has already made a representation to the Porte on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 154.

Lord Ebury to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 17.)

Dear Derby, *Moor Park, November* 17, 1874.

AT a meeting of the Council of the Evangelical Alliance held this afternoon a deputation was appointed to carry the address enclosed for presentation to the Sultan at Constantinople, and I am desired by the Council to request an audience for some members of it to wait upon you for the purpose of soliciting your good offices with our Ambassador at the Court of the Sultan, to procure for the deputations an audience of His Imperial Majesty at which they may present the memorial.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) EBURY.

No. 155.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 19.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,
My Lord, *London, November* 18, 1874.

BY request of Lord Ebury I have the pleasure of enclosing your Lordship the accompanying copies of address to the Sultan, about to be taken by a deputation from this Alliance to Constantinople.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

Inclosure in No. 155.

Proposed Address to the Sultan on the subject of Religious Persecutions in Turkey.

To His Imperial Majesty the Sultan Abdul Aziz.

May it please your Majesty,

THE undersigned Memorialists, members of different nationalities, and of various Christian Churches united in the Evangelical Alliance by the bonds of a common faith, approach your Majesty with the expression of their highest respect.

They gratefully acknowledge the valuable concessions made to the cause of civil and religious liberty, which have shown the enlightened sentiments of your Imperial Government. They refer especially with much satisfaction, to a declaration made on a former occasion to the representative of Great Britain, that "henceforward neither shall Christianity be insulted in my dominions, nor shall Christians be in any way persecuted for their religion;" and to the subsequent Hatti-Sheriff, declaring that "no subject of His Majesty the Sultan shall be hindered in the exercise of the religion that he professes, nor shall he in any way be molested on that account."

Your Memorialists have learned, however, with feelings of deep regret, that in some recent instances your Majesty's benevolent intentions have been frustrated; and that, contrary to the engagement entered into with several European Governments, the adoption of the Christian faith by some of your Majesty's subjects has been visited with cruel persecution on the part of certain Provincial Magistrates, who have thus acted in opposition to your Majesty's righteous and benevolent declarations.

They allude to the cases already brought before your Majesty's Government.

Three Ansairiyeh converts to Christianity, who had been living peaceable and blameless lives as teachers in a Christian Mission School, were in September last suddenly seized, put in chains, and, after being denied food and drink, marched to Jebili, and thence to Damascus, where they were thrown into prison, and have been (we are

credibly informed) repeatedly beaten, reviled, and otherwise shamefully treated. No crime or offence against the law was brought against them, but on their refusal to abjure the Christian faith they were enrolled in the Turkish army, and refused the exercise of Christian worship.

Your Memorialists are informed that, in consequence of representations made on behalf of these converts, orders have been given for their removal to Constantinople; but such removal whilst affording, possibly, some amelioration to their sad condition, would nevertheless involve banishment from their homes and families, and from the honourable employments in which they were engaged.

Another case is that of a father and son, who, because they avowed themselves Christians, were taken by the police from their homes at Marash, bound, and brought under a strong guard to Aleppo, from whence they were subsequently removed to Constantinople, and put in prison. They have since, with the wife of the elder one, been banished to Smyrna; their three children, contrary to the wish of their parents, having been placed in a Moslem family, whose religious opinions are utterly opposed to their own convictions.

Your Memorialists are well aware of the numerous difficulties which your Majesty has to encounter in giving effect to the pledges of religious liberty so generously accorded a few years since. But they feel constrained to submit to your Majesty's notice that the persecution of individuals for exercising their personal right to believe and worship according to their own free conscience, is both a violation of Treaty engagements, and at variance with the enlightened sentiments of civilized nations.

Assured of your Majesty's gracious disposition, your Memorialists humbly, but earnestly, entreat that prompt and effective measures may be taken to redress the wrongs inflicted on your Majesty's Christian and loyal subjects, as above mentioned; that they may be recalled from banishment and restored to their homes and useful occupations; and that the officers of your Majesty's Government, in the provinces and elsewhere, may be charged to preserve free from molestation, and secure in the enjoyment of their religious privileges, any individuals whomsoever, professing Christianity, over whom, by your Majesty's appointment, they exercise authority.

(Signatures to follow.)

Dear Sir, *Elmley House, Wimbledon, September* 11, 1874.

I hasten to acknowledge your letter of the 1st instant, which only came to my hands this morning.

It seems to me that the proposed Address to the Sultan, of which you kindly sent me a copy, is reasonable, well timed, and much needed. I wish it success with all my heart.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE.

To the Rev. J. Davis,
Secretary to the Evangelical Alliance.

No. 156.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 20.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,
My Lord, *London, November* 19, 1874.

I AM instructed by the British Council of this Alliance to inform your Lordship that, in addition to efforts which they have already made on behalf of persecuted Christians in Turkey, and in which they have been so kindly aided by Her Majesty's Government, it is proposed to present an address to the Sultan, a printed copy of which I have the honour to inclose.

The Council, under ordinary circumstances, would request the favour of your Lordship conveying the document, suitably prepared for His Imperial Majesty, through the usual channel, but, acting under advice, they deem it highly desirable that, in this case, it should be taken and presented by a deputation specially appointed for the purpose, provided, however, this step meet with your Lordship's approval, and also that your Lordship oblige them by instructing Her Majesty's Ambassador to solicit an audience with the Sultan for the deputation, and accompany it, if granted.

Your Lordship will doubtless notice the international character of the address, and the high influential position both of those who sign it on behalf of the Alliance, and of those who support the Petition.

The following gentlemen, jointly with the Secretary, have been invited to form the deputation: The Earl of Cavan, the Earl of Aberdeen, Samuel Gurney, Esq., James Spicer, Esq., Jabez Johnson, Esq., and the Reverend J. S. Blackwood, D.D., L.L.D.

As it is desirable that they should leave England not later than the next or following week, I would, on behalf of the Council, solicit the favour of your Lordship making any communications that may be necessary with Constantinople by telegram, in order that, if the replies be favourable, the deputation may proceed without delay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

Inclosure in No. 156.

Proposed Address to the Sultan on the subject of Religious Persecutions in Turkey.

[See Inclosure in No. 155.]

No. 157.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 20.)

(Private.) *Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,*
Dear Lord Tenterden, *London, November* 20, 1874.

I PRESUME I had better at once send a telegram to our correspondent in Constantinople, requesting him immediately to furnish Sir Henry Elliot with a copy of the Address to the Sultan.

Truly yours,
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 158.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, November* 21, 1874, 6:30 P.M.

THE Evangelical Alliance desire to send out a deputation to present an Address to the Sultan, respecting religious persecution in Turkey. A copy of the Address will be given to you by their agent. They wish the deputation to have an audience of the Sultan, and for you to accompany it.

Report by telegram whether they can have the audience.

I telegraph the names *en clair*:—

Earl of Cavan, Earl of Aberdeen, Mr. S. Gurney, Mr. J. Spicer, Mr. J. Johnson, Reverend J. Blackwood.

No. 159.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 21, 1874.

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to request that you will inform the Committee of the Evangelical Alliance that, in compliance with the request contained in your letter of the 19th instant, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has been instructed by telegraph to report whether an audience of the Sultan can be procured for the deputation to be sent to Constantinople to present the Address to His Majesty; and I am to request that you will instruct your Agent at Constantinople by telegraph to furnish his Excellency with a copy of the Address which it is proposed to present.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 160.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 24.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street Strand,
My Lord, *London, November 23, 1874.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 21st instant, and in reply beg to inform you that, agreeably to your Lordship's request, I telegraphed to our Representative at Constantinople, instructing him immediately to hand to Her Majesty's Ambassador a copy of the Address for presentation to the Sultan by the proposed deputation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 161.

Aarifi Psha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, November 24.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 24 Novembre, 1874.*

SIR HENRY ELLIOT vient de recevoir de Lord Derby un télégramme par lequel, en l'informant que l'Alliance Evangélique va envoyer à Constantinople une députation chargée de présenter à notre Souverain une adresse concernant la prétendue persécution religieuse en Turquie, le Chef du Foreign Office exprime le désir de savoir si cette députation sera reçue par Sa Majesté.

Ce dernier point dépend de la volonté de Sa Majesté, qui en décidera en temps et lieu; nous ne pouvons donc rien dire dès à présent. Quant à l'objet de la mission, il échappe à notre intelligence. La liberté de conscience est et demeurera pleine et entière dans l'Empire. Ce n'est pas une députation comme celle dont il s'agit qui changera rien à la situation; le Gouvernement Impérial ne se départira jamais de la ligne de conduite éminemment libérale qu'il s'est tracée à l'égard des divers cultes qui sont professés en Turquie.

Veuillez bien vous exprimer à sa Seigneurie dans ce sens.

No. 162.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 25.)

(No. 22. Political.)
My Lord, *Damascus, November 10, 1874.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch addressed this day by me to Sir Henry Elliot, reporting to his Excellency the arrival in Damascus from Lattakia and Beyrout, as military prisoners, of five Ansairiyeh Christians, and the enlightened and liberal manner in which his Highness Essad Pasha has expressed himself concerning their treatment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 162.

Vice-Consul Green to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Damascus, November 10, 1874.*

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 3rd instant notice was sent to me that a number of Ansairiyeh Christians had arrived at Damascus from Lattakia and Beyrout as military prisoners, and Mr. Selim Meshaka, one of the dragomans of this Consulate, in compliance with a supplication from them, succeeded in seeing them.

The prisoners are five in number, and are named Halil Hassan, Ibrahim Khalify, Assad Kanaan, Selim Khalify, and Iusef Jedid. The two last are the Ansairiyeh

Christian soldiers whose desertion from their regiments I reported to your Excellency in my despatch No. 23 of the 28th July last.

The prisoners complained to Mr. Meshaka that they had been treated with considerable harshness, and had not been provided with rations since their arrival in Damascus, and they urged him to beg me to endeavour to obtain for them some alleviation from their present state.

I have not thought it right to take any direct official steps on behalf of these men, as I am unacquainted with the details of their arrest at Lattakia, and as they will, no doubt, ultimately share in any favours that your Excellency may obtain for their companion Suleiman Daoud who is now serving in a regiment at Constantinople; but, an opportunity having arisen, I was able to ask Essad Pasha to give orders that these men should be treated in the same manner as other military prisoners.

His Highness said that he had not heard before of the arrival of the men in Damascus, and he regretted that undue importance should have been given to their case by their being sent here under an escort of twenty-five soldiers, when two guards would have been sufficient. He promised to inquire into the whole matter, and he foresaw no difficulty in having all the Ansairiyeh Christians attached to the Dragoon Regiment, which is composed of men of all religions. In any event his Highness would be careful to see that these men should not be treated in an exceptional manner, and that they should have full liberty to follow the precepts of their religious faith.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 162.

The Earl of Shaftesbury to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 25.)

Dear Lord Derby, *London, November 20, 1874.*

MAY I ask you to look at the Memorial, a copy of which is inclosed, addressed by the Bible Society to the Ambassador at Constantinople.

I inclose also a copy of my letter to Sir H. G. Elliot.

May we ask your aid in this matter whenever it shall come under your notice? Your predecessor, Earl Russell, on a similar occasion gave me very effectual assistance.

Yours truly,
(Signed) SHAFTESBURY.

Inclosure in No. 162.

The Earl of Shaftesbury to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *London, November 20, 1874.*

MAY I take the liberty of placing before you a Memorial from the President and Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society?

The only link that binds the people of England to the maintenance of the Turkish Empire is the belief that the Ottoman Porte is favourable to religious liberty.

A departure from this feeling would irrecoverably separate the two nations.

We believe, moreover, that we have rights by Treaty to the privilege we claim.

I very respectfully request the countenance and aid of your Excellency on our behalf.

Your obedient servant,
(Signed) SHAFTESBURY.

No. 163.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, November 25, 1874, 12·10 P.M.*

I CONVEYED to the Porte the substance of your Lordship's telegram of the 21st instant.

The Porte has telegraphed its reply to Musurus Pacha, which is to the effect that

the question of the reception of the Deputation of the Evangelical Alliance will be reserved for the decision of the Sultan at the proper time.

It is added that the mission can have no practical result, as the Imperial Government is resolved not to modify the liberal policy it has always followed towards the different religions.

No. 164.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 26.)

(Private.) *Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,*
My Lord, *London, November 25, 1874.*

ALLOW me to ask whether, on this important occasion, and looking to the interest awakened among persons of high distinction in this and other countries in the objects of the proposed deputation to Constantinople, I may be permitted to suggest to Lord Derby that possibly Her Majesty may feel disposed to grant me the honour of an audience to show Her Majesty the address prepared for presentation to the Sultan, and to state a few particulars concerning this Christian and Catholic enterprise.

Such an expression of interest in the objects of the mission on the part of Her Majesty would be not only most gratifying, but encouraging to the Deputation proceeding to Constantinople, and to all interested in the cause of religious liberty.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 165.

Memoranda by Lord Tenterden and Lord Derby.

MR. DAVIS, of the Evangelical Alliance, called and asked—

1. Whether we had heard that Sir H. Elliot had received the copy of the Address.

2. Whether I could give him any assurance that the deputation might start on Saturday week.

In reply to the first inquiry, I said that we had not heard positively, but I presumed he had received the copy.

In reply to the second, that I had every reason to believe that you would shortly be in a position to give him an answer, but that I really could not undertake the responsibility of advising in the matter.

He then went on to say that the fact was that even if there were a difficulty about procuring an audience, the mere presence at Constantinople of such a deputation would be of use; it might influence the representatives of other Powers.

Moreover, speaking quite confidentially, he might say that he had heard, though he did not know what foundation there was for it, that the conduct of Her Majesty's Ambassador was far from satisfactory, and that fault was found with it not only by British subjects, but by the representatives of other Powers.

I said that I really must beg him not to make such statements to me personally. There could not be such a thing as a confidential conversation between us on this point. Either he wished me to repeat what he had said to Lord Derby, or he did not. If he did, he was bound to state explicitly what were the precise complaints, who made them, and who were the foreign Representatives who supported them. If he could not furnish these particulars, and did not desire me to repeat what he had said, I must really ask him to excuse my listening to any vague, and as I felt confident, unfounded, denunciation of one of Her Majesty's Ambassadors.

I added that we were doing all we could to expedite his business, but that Lord Derby had been engaged all day with a deputation on a most important commercial question, and that it was impossible for us to do more for him than we were doing. I was sure of one thing, that if he went to Constantinople, his opinion of Sir H. Elliot would be most favourable if he went to proper sources for information. He was very much obliged for all we had done, and left, apparently well satisfied.

November 26, 1874. T.

These people will give abundance of trouble, and have the public with them to a considerable extent. We might press Elliot to do what he can to get them a hearing.

November 27, 1874. D.

No. 166.

The Rev. E. Hutchinson to Mr. Sanderson.—(Received November 27.)

Church Missionary House, Salisbury Square,
Sir, *November 25, 1874.*

WITH reference to my interview with you to-day on the subject of religious intolerance in Turkey, I have the pleasure to inclose proof copies of the Memorial and statement on the subject, and shall be glad to know whether anything has transpired to remove the necessity for the Memorial.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EDW. HUTCHINSON,
Secretary, Church Missionary Society.

Inclosure 1 in No. 166.

Memorial.

To the Right Honourable the Earl of Derby, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Memorial of the Right Honourable the President and the Committee of the Church Missionary Society.

YOUR Memorialists would respectfully submit, for your Lordship's consideration, that when, in 1856, the Sultan of Turkey conceded the Hatti-Humayoun, they were encouraged to extend their operations in the Ottoman Empire. Knowing as they did that this charter of religious liberty had been granted at the urgent requisition of England and France, in consideration of the enormous sacrifices these Christian Powers had made in support of the Sultan's Empire, your Memorialists had full reliance that the diplomatic engagements entered into by Turkey would be respected; and although they have since been compelled in some cases to complain of the violent and arbitrary proceedings of Turkish officials, your Memorialists would acknowledge with thankfulness that your Lordship's predecessors in office have intervened with such good effect, that not only redress has been afforded to those who have suffered religious persecution, but as in the case referred to in the Foreign Office despatch, dated December, 15, 1864, the Turkish Government were called upon to give fresh assurances that religious freedom should not hereafter be assailed or restricted.

Your Memorialists are sorry to be obliged to solicit once again intervention in their behalf. In furtherance of the work in which the Church Missionary Society is engaged, it has been their practice, not only in the Ottoman Empire, but in other parts of the world, to establish schools, which are open to those who are willing to attend. Several schools have in this way been established by them in Palestine, and carried on for some years, not only without opposition of any kind, but to the marked satisfaction of the people, who frequently beg the missionaries to open fresh schools. In accordance with a request of this nature, a school has been recently opened by the Church Missionary Society at Acco, and your Memorialists have now to complain that this has been suddenly closed in an arbitrary manner by order of the Turkish Governor-General of Syria. It is the first time that the Turkish Government has closed a school in Palestine, and as to the plea advanced that it should not have been opened without official permission, it is sufficient to state that such permission has not been considered necessary either in the case of schools opened by other denominations in Syria, or of those belonging to the Church Missionary Society. It may be added, that the opening of the new school at Acco had the concurrence of the Protestant Bishop of Jerusalem.

Your Memorialists would further submit, for your Lordship's consideration, that this is no isolated case of unwarrantable interference with the work carried on by Protestant missionaries in Turkey; for, as your Lordship has been informed through other channels, three Protestant teachers of a school at Lattakia were suddenly seized, subjected to

ill-treatment, and on their refusal to abjure the Christian faith, were forcibly enrolled in the Turkish army, although by the rules in force in the Ottoman Empire they were not liable to military service, having paid the regular tax in lieu of service; and further, as teachers, having a claim to exemption. If under these circumstances Greek and Latin Christians are not considered liable to military service, it is not unreasonable to ask why Protestant teachers of schools should be dealt with in an exceptional manner.

Again, your Memorialists would refer to another case, in which a man named Mustapha, of Marash, his wife and son, have been imprisoned in consequence of their profession of Christianity, and when eventually released, they have not been allowed to return home, but have been placed under surveillance at Smyrna; meanwhile Mustapha's three younger children are kept at Marash in a Mohammedan family, and compelled to attend a Mohammedan school.

It is true that the sufferers referred to here are members of congregations to which American missionaries minister, still on this account they are not the less entitled to support and sympathy, and your Memorialists would urge, that if the Turkish officials find that they persecute with impunity those who have embraced the Protestant faith in one part of the Empire, they will not be slow to adopt the same policy towards those converts in whom your Memorialists are more directly interested. Indeed, indications of such a policy are apparent in the closing of the school at Acco, and also in the hindrances which are now put for the first time in the way of printing the Turkish Scriptures. On this subject, the Rev. Robert Wheately, a missionary of the Church Missionary Society, writes as follows:—"With regard to the printing of the Turkish Scriptures, we are told, after ten years of unquestioned liberty to print Scriptures and books concerning the Scriptures, that a special license is necessary."

Your Memorialists would respectfully but very earnestly represent that all the acts referred to above are in direct violation of the very letter, as well as of the spirit of the Hatti-Humayoun, and of the diplomatic engagements into which the Porte has entered with Great Britain. In a despatch dated January 9, 1856, to Lord Clarendon, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe wrote as follows on the advantages which would follow on the adoption by the Turkish Government of a more enlightened policy in place of the traditional exclusiveness which had heretofore characterized the administration of the Ottoman Empire:—

"We all in turn expressed a desire to bring the various classes of the Sultan's subjects into harmony and confidence with each other, as a source of prosperity to the Empire, whose Government would find its advantage, both internally and externally, in acting no longer on the principles of religious exclusiveness or predominance of race, but on those broader, sounder maxims which have only to be carried out with perseverence in order to produce a full measure of national unity and strength."

Your Memorialists therefore conceive that in protesting against the reactionary policy which the Turkish Government have thought fit to adopt, they are consulting the best interests of the Turkish Empire, while at the same time it is obvious that without religious liberty the work in which your Memorialists are engaged cannot but be seriously hindered and impeded.

By order of the Committee,

(Signed) CHICHESTER, *President.*
C. C. FENN,
HENRY WRIGHT,
EDWARD HUTCHINSON,
EDWARD LAKE,
} *Secretaries.*

Church Missionary House, November 18, 1874.

Inclosure 2 in No. 166.

Statement respecting Religious Persecution in Turkey.

WHEN, in consequence of the vigorous and persistent representations of the British Government and other Christian Powers in Europe, the Sultan of Turkey conceded, in 1856, the Hatti-Humayoun, by which the religious liberties of all his subjects were guaranteed, without distinction of creed, a strong party in the State opposed the concession, and have since endeavoured, again and again, to render nugatory the provisions of this charter of religious liberty. A memorable instance of this occurred in Jul 1864, when the agents of the Turkish Government suddenly invaded, at Constantinople,

the hired rooms of missionaries, seized their books, and imprisoned nine of the persons who were found at the time in these rooms. An energetic remonstrance of the British Government effected, after some delay, the release of these prisoners, and Earl Russell, in a despatch dated December 15, 1864, took occasion to ask for fresh assurances from the Turkish Government that religious freedom should not, in future, be assailed or restricted, expressing himself in the following terms:—

"I am willing, for my part, now that the Turkish converts, though not restored to Constantinople, have been set at liberty, to concur with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in opinion that it would be useless and unadvisable to seek redress for past wrongs. But I must ask assurance for the future; and if, in reply, I am to be told that the reference to the Hatti-Humayoun in the Treaty of 1856, and the promises made to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, have no practical value, and that neither missionaries nor converts can derive any protection from these documents, I am convinced that the feelings of the English nation towards Turkey will be seriously affected, and their disposition to defend the integrity of the Turkish Empire much abated. But, in fact, the Turkish Government do not take their stand on any such grounds. Aali Pasha has, by his last despatch, admitted the right of Her Majesty's Government to inquire and make representations on such matters, and he has accounted, or attempted to account, to Her Majesty's Government for the late violent proceedings of the Sultan's Government, by stating the apprehensions which the Porte felt that the peace of the capital might be disturbed; indeed, it cannot be denied that, in extraordinary emergencies, a Government is bound to provide for the public tranquility by measures which, at the moment, may be harsh and unusual. I must, however, desire you to obtain from Aali Pasha assurances that religious freedom will not hereafter be assailed or restricted by the Turkish Government. Doubtless the Government of the Sultan will take precautions for the preservation of the civil peace; but such precautions are quite compatible with religious freedom."

The Committee of the Church Missionary Society are in receipt of communications from missionaries labouring in connection with them in the Ottoman Empire, by which it is clear that the Turkish authorities have recently adopted measures of a reactionary character altogether opposed to the policy urged by Earl Russell in 1864, and the pledges given in the Hatti-Humayoun in 1856, when it was declared that "no subject of His Majesty the Sultan shall be hindered in the exercise of the religion he professes, nor shall he be in any way molested on this account."

From the correspondence which passed at the time, it would be easy to multiply extracts showing that the terms and spirit of the diplomatic engagements into which the Porte then entered, guaranteed to the Christian convert from Mohammedanism, or other creed, that he should not in any way be molested; and at the same time guaranteed to Christian missionaries the reasonable and peaceable exercise of their office. On this point Lord Clarendon (in May, 1855) then Secretary of State, thus expressed himself:—

"Furthermore, Her Majesty's Government considers that there should not only be complete toleration of non-Mussulman religion, but that all punishment on converts from Islamism, whether natives or foreigners, ought to be abolished."

In violation of these engagements it would appear, by a recent communication received from the Rev. John Zeller, who, since 1857, has laboured at Nazareth and in that neighbourhood, he reports that a Protestant school he had recently opened at Acco had been closed by the orders of the Governor-General of Syria. Further, the Rev. Robert Wenkley, who is engaged at Constantinople in a revision of the Turkish translation of the Scriptures, gives a detailed account of several cases of persecution. In one case three Protestant teachers of schools, formerly belonging to the Ansairiyeh sect, were suddenly seized and ill-treated, and on their refusal to abjure the Christian faith, were forcibly enrolled in the Turkish army, although, by the rules in force in the Ottoman Empire, they were not liable to military service. In another case a man named Mustapha, of Marash, with his wife and son, have been imprisoned in consequence of their profession of Christianity, and when eventually released, they have not been allowed to return home, but have been placed under surveillance at Smyrna; meanwhile, Mustapha's three younger children are kept at Marash, in a Mohammedan family, and compelled to attend a Mohammedan school. Mr. Wenkley also reports that the printing of the Turkish Scriptures has been for some time suspended.

Extracts from Mr. Zeller's and Mr. Wenkley's letters are given below, in which fuller

* Lord Russell's predecessors in the Foreign Office advocated the same policy, for in May, 1855, when Lord Clarendon was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, he thus expressed himself:—"Furthermore, Her Majesty's Government consider that there should not only be complete toleration of non-Mussulman religion, but that all punishment on converts from Islamism, whether natives or foreigners, ought to be abolished."

information is given regarding all the cases referred to above, and regarding the reactionary policy the Turkish authorities have now put in force.

Extract from a Letter dated Nazareth, September 7, 1874, from the Rev. John Zeller, addressed to the Secretary of the Church Missionary Society.

I have just time by this post to inform you that the Pasha of Acco has closed our school there, on the plea that a special permission from the higher authorities was necessary. I beg to inclose a copy of a letter I have written to our Consul-General on this subject, from which you will see the particulars. It is the first time that the Turkish Government has closed a school in Palestine; it causes, therefore, a good deal of sensation, and the consequences of this act will be serious for all Protestants in Galilee, and greatly hinder the preaching of the gospel. This is especially the case at Acco, where now any opposition against our native teacher is invested with the sanction of the Government. As I am not sure whether Mr. Eldridge will be able to prevail on the Consul-General of Damascus to issue a counter-order, I would beg you to write to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople to procure orders for the non-interference with our school at Acco and at other places.

On a recent visit at Acco I examined our school, and was much pleased with the progress of the children and with the interest which many people seemed to take in our work.

Copy of a Letter dated Nazareth, September 7, 1874, addressed by the Rev. John Zeller to G. Jackson Eldridge, Esq., Her Britannic Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout.

Sir *Nazareth, September 7, 1874.*

In a note from Acca I had the honour to inform you that the Mouteseriff of Acco ordered me to close the school which the Church Missionary Society had opened there.

On the 3rd instant the Mouteseriff read to me two orders from his Excellency the Governor-General of Syria. The first, sent by telegraph, was to the effect that it had come to the ears of the authorities at Damascus that the English had begun the building of a church and school at Nazareth without permission from the Government; their building had therefore to be stopped at once. The second order stated that, as it had been reported that English schools had been opened in the Hauran and at Nazareth without the permission from the Government, these schools had to be closed without delay.

I represented to the Mouteseriff that, as the Church Missionary Society had neither opened any school in the Hauran, nor was at present building a church or school at Nazareth—for the building there belongs to another Society—these orders could not refer to the work of the Church Missionary Society. This Society had obtained two Firmans from His Majesty the Sultan for their churches, which were entered in the Government registers at Acco and Damascus, and a list of the schools connected with these churches had twice been sent by me through the Kaimakam of Nazareth to the higher authorities.

The Mouteseriff seemed not to be aware of these facts, and even refused to give me a copy of the orders he had read to me. He said he could not permit the continuance of the school at Acco without express orders from the Wali of Damascus.

Though the building of schools may require special permission, I have hitherto not been aware that the opening of a day-school in a hired room would require a Firman.

In the Firman of the Bishop of Jerusalem it is stated, as I believe, that he is authorized to open schools, and the well-known Hatti-Hoomayoun guaranteed to all Christian communities the right to open schools. Shall now these privileges be curtailed by restrictive orders? If the Turkish Government is anxious to care for the education of their subjects, why does this anxiety show itself in the sudden closing of a vernacular day-school opened by the English, against which, hitherto, no objection nor complaint has been made? Or would the introduction of a new system not require an equal application to all Christian communities? But I have not yet heard that a general investigation has been made whether other schools possess permissive documents, or that any other schools have been peremptorily closed for the want of them, though the French Sœurs de Nazareth established schools at Nazareth, Caiffa, Acco, and Shefamer, and though the Franciscans are building very extensively here and on Mount Tabor.

Besides this there exists no Inspector of schools here, nor has the Turkish Government during the last twenty-four years even taken the slightest notice of the schools superintended by us.

The closing of our school at Acco has caused great surprise to the inhabitants, and disappointment to the Protestants, and it is naturally regarded as a sign that the Turkish Government wants to put down Protestantism by force. Our teacher at Acca was told by a Latin that if anyone should now profess to be a Protestant he would strike him on his right cheek and on his left, and tell him this was done by the order of the Pasha.

I would now take the liberty to ask you that you would have the kindness to explain these circumstances to His Excellency the Governor-General of Syria, and request him to issue the permission for re-opening the school at Acco.

At the same time, I beg to mention that two orders from the Wali to the Mouteseriff of Acca, with regard to the more effective representation of Protestants in the medjlis of Nazareth and Shefamer, have been utterly disregarded by him.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN ZELLER.

Extract from a Letter dated Constantinople, September 25, 1874, from the Rev. Robert Wealdey, addressed to the Secretaries of the Church Missionary Society.

On my arrival at Constantinople in May, I found our missionary atmosphere heavy with impending troubles. The constant expectation of events which would materially affect our work in the country, and the difficulty of giving shape to apprehensions, however real, have led me to defer writing until now. At the present moment, looking at our position merely from the human point of view, there is nothing but the general instability of Turkish affairs to prevent the entire suppression of missions to Mohammedans in Turkey. There are many indications that this is the systematic policy of the present Administration. It will not be needful to enter into any lengthy statement of what has occurred. I will merely make a few notes illustrative of the systematic character of the present movement against Christian work.

1. With regard to the three teachers of schools among the Ansairiyeh, in the neighbourhood of Lattukia, these men had been consistent Christians for periods of from eight to ten years. They had scrupulously paid the tax to which every Christian is liable as not being permitted to serve in the army, and had obtained receipts for those payments. They had pursued their profession as schoolmasters, unmolested and respected, until a new Deputy-Governor arrived at Lattakia. One of this officer's first acts was to close a school which Mr. Beattie, the American missionary, had recently opened. The three teachers were then invited to call upon him, and they suspecting, from what they had seen, that mischief was intended, took advantage of the form in which the invitation was sent to decline the honour. One of the sheikhs of their tribe was then commissioned to carry a second message, and to assure them that no harm was intended. Upon this assurance they went, were received politely, but in the midst of friendly conversation, a sign was given, they were immediately surrounded by soldiers, bound with chains, and carried off. They were then drafted into the army, were ill-treated, and commanded to abjure their faith. They were told that there were none but Mussulmans in the army, and that Mussulmans they must be by persuasion or by force. In the meantime, the schools were and are now closed. The assurance given to our Government that the men had been set at liberty was a deliberate lie. To this hour they have not been set free. Throughout the winter, the officers of the regiment into which they had been drafted continually urged them to desert, but without success. Not long ago, however, at the request of Sir Henry Elliot, the order was issued that they should be sent to the capital. Mr. Beattie, the American Missionary, had been with them, and had been much cheered by their constancy and faith, and had exhorted them rather to serve out their time patiently than to desert. To this they had assented readily; but when the order came for their removal, the officers made use of it to work upon their fears, by saying that it was intended to send them to Yemen, a place terrible to the Turks from the disease and death which reign among the soldiery, and by many other suggestions they succeeded in scaring two of the poor fellows away. After wandering about for a few days, they returned to their homes, to await what may come next. The third, David Suleiman, is here, confined to barracks and ill-treated, although our Ambassador informs us that the Grand Vizier has promised that he shall not be molested, and shall have perfect liberty to exercise his religion, see his friends, and go to a place of worship on the Lord's-day. He has been visited with very great difficulty, but never allowed even the common privileges of all soldiers when off duty.

With regard to these Lattakia men, it may be urged that the Turks have the right to take their soldiers from whatever class they please, and that the only thing we can ask is that they (the Protestant Christians) shall not be ill-treated as soldiers. No one disputes this abstract proposition; but there is a regular conscription, which is not and never has been, and assuredly is not intended to be applied to Christians. The army is the army of Islam, and from the Christian population a regular tax is levied in lieu of service, called "bedeliyé," which these men have paid regularly. The men were not drawn in the conscription, but forcibly taken from their homes. Among the Turks, ecclesiastics and schoolmasters are exempt; any man who passes a certain book-examination is exempt, and there are thousands of men in the Empire, who have neither interest in or connection with any mosque or school, who are not liable to service on this ground. The fact that three Protestant Christian schoolmasters were forcibly taken from their work and thrust into the army remains unique and inexplicable upon any other supposition than that of deliberate religious persecution. If any three Greek schoolmasters in any one district were so taken and put into the army, there would be a cry of wrath, and probably much more than a cry, from Crete to St. Petersburgh; all Europe would hear of the outrage. The Protestants, who have, on paper at least, equal rights with any other subjects of the Empire, are the only people who may be and are defamed and insulted with impunity. A Turk told me the other day that the Hatti-Humayoun, which I quoted to him, was like pleasant words spoken to a clamorous child to quiet him.

2. The next case is that of Mustapha, a Turk, a Christian of some fourteen years' standing, who, on daring to go openly to Christian worship in his native place, Marash, was arrested, together with his eldest son, Ali, and on their confessing their faith, were ill-treated, thrust into prison, sent bound to Aleppo, and there shipped to Constantinople, his wife having been brought down to the coast and put on board with him. Arrived in the capital, they were all put into the jail, the men with the criminals of the worst class, the woman in the women's prison, where they were detained twelve or fourteen days. Representations were made to the British Embassy, and, at the end of the period mentioned, notice was sent to the Embassy by the Minister of Foreign Affairs that the prisoners had been released. In fact, they were taken by guards on board a Turkish ship, and delivered to the custody of the Governor of Smyrna, who let them out of prison on their finding sureties that they should not leave the town or take any employment without the knowledge and permission of the Government, and that they should present themselves at the Government House once a week. In the meantime, their three younger children, the eldest of whom is fourteen or fifteen years of age, are kept in Marash, and compelled to go to a Mohammedan school.

3. With regard to the printing of the Turkish Scriptures, we are told, after ten years of unquestioned liberty to print the Scriptures and books concerning the Scriptures, that a special license is necessary. In consequence of this intimation, the printer made formal application for the permit. At first he was told to call again in a week's time for a reply, and on his calling at the end of that time, was put off for a month. Again, at the appointed time, he went to the Bureau, and was told with a sneer by the officials that a month afterwards would be time enough to seek for his permit; and now lately he has been treated with great insolence by the officials, who contemptuously informed him that the matter rested with the Grand Vizier. The master printer now refuses to submit to any further indignity, and will not again apply for the license. Thus, at this moment, with a quantity of type locked up in proofs, we stand, as far as the Osmanli Testament is concerned, just where we were three months ago.

The telegram which was published some time ago in the "Times," and copied by other newspapers, stating that the Grand Vizier had resolved to prohibit the printing and sale of the Scriptures in the Turkish language, was a true statement. It was the report of a direct communication from His Highness to Mr. Baker, the American Minister of Legation. I have not heard, however, that the sale of these books has been more than temporarily interrupted, but you will see that the threat to stop the printing has been accomplished to the letter. I may mention here, as showing the deliberate character of all these proceedings, that the Grand Vizier has stated distinctly to the American Minister of Legation that there is no such individual as an Osmanli Christian in the Empire, and that the Turkish Government is determined not to recognise the existence of one.

4. A short time ago I had an opportunity of reading a circular letter addressed to one of the Governors of the larger provinces, and signed by the Grand Vizier. The purport of the circular was to the effect that, as many books ha been introduced into the provinces injurious to the Ottoman Government, and subversive of the Mohammedan religion, and as, moreover, the ordinary Custom-house arrangements had failed to stop

the circulation of these books, in consequence of which the minds of very many of the Mahomedan population had become disturbed and disaffected, the Governor was commanded to use more stringent measures for stopping the introduction and forbidding the circulation of the said books, &c.

Now while this is, without doubt, aimed directly at our controversial publications, which have been and are read in every part of the Empire, there can be little doubt also that the command will be stretched, on occasion, to prohibit the sale of Scriptures.

While this paper was passing through the press, publicity has been given in the "Times," by the Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, to fresh cases of persecution, of which the following account has been communicated to him by the American missionary at Lattakia:—

"On the 15th of October, a company of Turkish soldiers went up and surrounded Bahura. A detachment went into the mission-yard, broke in the doors of the school-room, and took out Hassad Canoan, Ibrahim Akalelie, Haliel Rahjee, three members of our Church (the first two teachers), and Jusef Jaded and Saleem Chalafie, the two who escaped from Damascus in July last.

"The men have all been put into the army without the form of conscription. The soldiers went into their houses, broke the pottery vessels in which the Fellaheen keep their winter stores, and carried off their wheat, oil, figs, &c. They also went into the houses of others who had children in the schools, and committed similar outrages. Freddi, the wife of Saleem, was beaten with the butt-ends of their muskets, because she wore the Christian dress."

It is evident that the impunity attending the former arbitrary proceedings of the Turkish Administration has encouraged them to commit fresh acts of persecution, and unless they can be convinced that infraction of solemn pledges will not be tolerated, grave consequences may be apprehended.

Church Missionary House, Salisbury Square,
November 12, 1874.

No. 167.

The Earl of Derby to Musurus Pasha.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Foreign Office, November* 28, 1874.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the members of the Evangelical Alliance who desire to present an address to the Sultan have signified their anxiety to receive an early answer to their application for an audience of His Imperial Majesty, as they contemplate leaving for Constantinople in the course of a few days.

As I observe that the telegram from the Minister for Foreign Affairs which your Excellency was so good as to communicate to me on the 25th instant, containing no definitive answer to the application of the Evangelical Alliance, I should be obliged if your Excellency would inform me at your early convenience of the decision which may be come to on the subject.

I should also be glad if your Excellency would let me know whether there is any objection to my communicating a copy of this telegram to the Alliance.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 168.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

(Private.)
Dear Mr. Davis, *Foreign Office, November* 28, 1874.

I HAVE mentioned to Lord Derby the suggestion in your letter of the 25th respecting the presentation to the Queen of a copy of the address to the Sultan. He requests me to tell you that he thinks that it would be as well that this should not be mooted at the present stage of the question. He is in correspondence with both the British Embassy at Constantinople and the Turkish Embassy here, and as soon as there is anything to communicate I will let you know.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 169.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 30.)

(No. 23. Political.)
My Lord, *Damascus, November* 15, 1874.

WITH reference to my Political despatch No. 22 of the 10 instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith the copy of a despatch addressed by me this day to Sir H. Elliot, reporting to his Excellency that four of the Ansairiyeh Christians have been placed in the Dragoon Regiment, and that the fifth has been dismissed to his home as he drew a blank conscription paper.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 169.

Vice-Consul Green to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Damascus, November* 15, 1874.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 10th instant, I have the honour to report that his Highness Essad Pasha has informed me that he has already caused four of the Ansairiyeh Christians to be drafted into the Dragoon Regiment in which men of all religious denominations are serving, and that the fifth Ansairiyeh, whose name I have not yet ascertained, having drawn a blank conscription paper, has been dismissed and told that he is at liberty to return to his home.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 170.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 30.)

(No. 24. Political.)
My Lord, *Damascus, November* 15, 1874.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the copy of a despatch addressed by me this day to Sir Henry Elliot, reporting to his Excellency that there is no foundation for the statement in the newspapers that orders had been issued for the suppression of all Protestant schools in Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 170.

Vice-Consul Green to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Damascus, November* 15, 1874.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that his Highness Essad Pasha has informed me that he has noticed with regret that it has been prominently stated by the European press that orders had been issued by his Government for the suppression of all Protestant schools in Syria. There is no foundation for the statement, as schools may still be established on the observance of the same regulations as govern those that already exist in the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 171.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 30.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, November* 29, 1874, 11 P.M.

YOUR Lordship's telegram of to-day just received.

I yesterday spoke to the Minister for Foreign Affairs about the reception of the deputation. He said that the Porte could take no engagement beforehand on the subject; but he added that if it came, he had no doubt that the Sultan on my application would receive the members.

If they decide upon coming it would be desirable to alter the head of the Address, which would be considered offensive, and correct the inaccuracies of some of the statements in it.

No. 172.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Foreign Office, November* 30, 1874, 1 P.M.

I HAVE asked Musurus Pasha to obtain a definitive answer from the Porte to the application of the Evangelical Alliance deputation for an audience. Do what you properly can to get their request attended to. They will have public opinion here in their favour.

No. 173.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 30, 1874.

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that a despatch dated the 10th instant has been received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Damascus, in which Mr. Vice-Consul Green reports that five Ansairiyeh Christians having arrived from Lattakia and Beyrout as military prisoners, he requested Essad Pasha to give orders that these men should be treated in the same manner as other military prisoners.

His Highness replied that he had not heard of the arrival of the men in Damascus; but he promised to inquire into the matter, and he foresaw no difficulty in having all the Ansairiyeh Christians attached to the Dragoon Regiment, which is composed of men of all religions. In any event, his Highness would be careful to see that those men should not be treated in an exceptional manner, and that they should have full liberty to follow the precepts of their religious faith.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 174.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)

(No. 31. Political.)
My Lord, *Beyrout, November* 13, 1874.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting the arrest of five Ansairiyeh converts to Christianity in the district of Lattakia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 174.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir H. Elliot.

Beyrout, November 13, 1874.

Sir,

WITH reference to Mr. Vice-Consul Green's despatch of the 10th instant, reporting the arrival at Damascus, under arrest from Lattakia, of five Ansairiyeh converts to Christianity, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Vitali, reporting the manner in which these men were arrested.

I have also received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Beattie, American missionary at Lattakia, giving further details of the arrest of these men, and the violation of the mission premises, which in substance agree with Mr. Vitali's report.

With regard to the view I take of these proceedings on the part of the Turkish authorities, I have nothing to add to the opinion I expressed in my despatch to the Earl of Derby of the 20th of May last, of which a copy was transmitted to Mr. Locock in mine of the same date.

I venture to remark, however, that if the proposal of his Highness Essad Pasha, to draft the Ansairiyeh Christians into the Dragoon Regiment, where no doubt they would be better treated than in a purely Moslem corps, be accepted, it would be an admission that converts to Christianity remain as liable to military service as if that conversion had not taken place, and thus the question of principle would be settled.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 174.

Vice-Consul Vitali to Consul-General Eldridge.

Lattaquié, le 10 Novembre, 1874.

M. le Consul-Général,

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que le bataillon d'infanterie qui se trouve en cette ville depuis l'an dernier, s'étant rendu depuis quelques semaines au Canton de Kalbyé (district de Géhelé), pour y empêcher, dit-on, les Ansairiyehs de s'immiscer dans les troubles de leurs coreligionnaires de la même montagne dépendents de Hama, en arrivant au village de Karduha, où il a campé, a détaché une compagnie de troupes sous le commandement du Kolagassi (Lieutenant-Major) Chawki Effendi, avec ordre de surprendre le village de Bhamra, et d'y attrapper les Ansairiyehs convertis au Christianisme qui s'y trouveraient. Cet ordre a été donné par le Binbaschi (Major) Habib Effendi, mais j'ignore de quelle autorité supérieure il tire son origine.

Le village de Bhamra et l'école des missionnaires Américains qui s'y trouve ont été donc surpris le 15 Octobre à la pointe du jour. Cinq Ansairiyehs convertis furent saisis dans cette école; ce sont: Yussuf Jedeed et Halil Baijé, qui ont été pris et envoyés à Damas l'an passé et qui ont déserté depuis quelques mois, ainsi que Salim Kalafy, Assad Kanâan, et Ibrahim Kalafy. Ces trois derniers se sont convertis en 1863, 1870, et 1874.

Tous les cinq ont été envoyés à Beyrouth et à Damas, depuis 28 Octobre dernier; et l'on assure qu'ils ont été très maltraités par les troupes.

Aussi j'ai appris d'une source certaine que toutes les maisons des dits convertis ont été visitées et presque saccagées par les troupes, et que lorsque l'école a été surprise Chawki Effendi a enfoncé la porte d'une chambre où ces convertis dormaient et que les troupes ont dit des injures et des blasphèmes contre les Chrétiens et contre leur religion.

Je crois devoir ajouter, M. le Consul-Général, que dans le Canton de Kalbyé, il y a plusieurs déserteurs de l'armée Ottomane, et que nul n'a été ainsi saisi sauf les Ansairiyehs convertis.

J'ai, &c.

(Signé) N. VITALI.

No. 175.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)

(No. 296.)

My Lord,

Therapia, November 15, 1874.

FOR some time past a new Turkish translation of the Bible has been in preparation by the Bible Society, which has for a number of years had a branch in this country, but the authority to print it was upon one pretext or other continually withheld, notwithstanding the support that I gave to the application for the Government sanction, and I was finally informed that the Porte had resolved absolutely to refuse it.

Upon this I sent a very strong message to Aarifi Pasha through Mr. Sandison who was directed to point out to his Excellency that, as permission for the printing and circulation of the Scriptures had been given eleven years ago at the request of Her Majesty's Embassy by the late Aali Pasha, if it was now withheld, it would indicate on the part of the Porte a change in the policy, so often proclaimed, of allowing perfect liberty to all religious denominations; and as I refused to believe that the Sultan could have sanctioned any such change, it would be my duty to ascertain the fact.

Aarifi Pasha took this message in very bad part, saying that I might take what steps I pleased; but that his decision was irrevocable, and would be neither rescinded nor reconsidered, and that Mr. Sandison might tell me so.

A few days later I saw his Excellency myself, when I found his tone greatly modified; he admitted that he had at first been greatly irritated by my message, but he promised that the question should be again examined, and if it turned out, as I asserted, that the permission of the Porte had on a former occasion been granted, there would seem to be less reason for refusing it now, and his Excellency yesterday informed me that I might consider the question as satisfactorily settled.

The circumstances appeared to me to justify the adoption of a higher tone than I am fond of employing; but I am bound to confess that in the conversation which I had with Aarifi Pasha yesterday, there was much in what his Excellency said, both about the printing and the colportage of the Bible in Turkish, which gave some justification for the repugnance of the Porte to allow them.

He repeated that no objection was felt by the Porte either to the printing or the hawking of the Scriptures in the language of any of the Christian subjects of the Sultan; but that it could not be denied that the Turkish copies were intended for the Mahomedans whom it was hoped to convert, and the books were often thrust upon them in a manner which to them seem offensive to their religion, and repugnant to their feelings.

I inquired whether the dislike to the colportage was confined to that of the books in Turkish.

He said that as far as the Porte was concerned it was, but the custom was complained of by most of the Chiefs of the different Christian denominations, and especially by the Catholics.

I begged him not to be persuaded by their arguments to stop a practice which had gone on for a good many years with the direct sanction of the Porte, and the withdrawal of which would be deeply resented by a large and influential class of the well-wishers of Turkey.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 176.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)

(No. 297.)

My Lord,

Therapia, November 15, 1874.

AN incident has occurred in Syria which, if not treated with greater discretion than the Porte have been lately showing in such matters, is not unlikely to give rise to an unpleasant complication with the Government of the United States.

I learn from my American colleague that the military or police, in their search for the two Ansairiyehs who had deserted, forcibly entered the domicile of an American missionary in the neighbourhood of Lattakia, from whence they removed the men in question, after having greatly misconducted themselves.

Mr. Baker is prepared to take the matter up very seriously, and to require ample reparation for an act so manifestly illegal.

He had frequently said to me that if the missionaries were harbouring the deserters, and thus violating the law, he would not protect them from the consequences to which they might expose themselves; and if application had been made to him to have a search made on their premises, he would at once have acceded to it, and the readiness which he has always shown in recognizing the legitimate authority of the Turkish officials leaves their present proceedings without excuse.

Mr. Baker had some intention of requiring that the men should be sent back to the place where they were found, on the understanding that they would be removed from it with his concurrence regularly obtained, but, while agreeing that he would be right to insist upon a full reparation, I discouraged him from making a demand, with which it would be extremely difficult to obtain compliance.

Although the conduct of the Turkish authorities is inexcusable, that of the missionaries is apparently not free from blame, and, if they are shown to have knowingly sheltered deserters from the Imperial army, they must be held responsible for the consequences which may result from a proceeding which is in no country regarded with indifference.

The indiscreet zeal of some of those connected with the foreign educational institution had already created a prejudice against establishments calculated to be of much benefit to the country, and it is greatly to be feared that the liberty hitherto accorded to them may be restricted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 177.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)

(No. 299.)
My Lord, *Therapia, November 16, 1874.*

I RECEIVED by the last messenger your Lordship's despatch No. 185, directing me to express to the Porte the satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government at the measures taken for insuring the representation of the Protestant communities in the Provincial Councils; but I deferred making the communication in consequence of being informed that renewed ground of complaint had been given, which I intend to lay before Aarify Pasha as soon as I have obtained the particulars.

I have this morning had a long conversation with the Vekil, or official head of the community, who is to provide me with a specific statement of their grievances, which he attributes in great part to two distinct and almost contradictory causes,—the one being the hostility of all the other Christian sects, the Chiefs of which can often exert much influence over the Turkish authorities; and the other being the indiscreet activity of the foreign Protestant missionaries.

The native Protestants are a highly respectable, industrious, and inoffensive community, only asking to be treated on an equality with the other Christian sects, but neither seeking to make converts nor meddling in the affairs of others, and they believe that they would meet with more favour from the Porte if they were not supposed to be identified with the missionaries, whose proceedings have indisposed the authorities towards them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 178.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)

(No. 302. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, November 20, 1874.*

YOUR Lordship has received from Mr. Consul-General Eldridge a copy of his despatch to me No. 51, inclosing a despatch from the Vice-Consul at Lattakia, stating that he had been officially informed by the Kaimakam of that place that he had received instructions from the Porte not to allow foreigners to build or open schools, and to cause all those at present open to be closed.

When I remonstrated against this measure to Aarify Pasha, he professed to know nothing about it, but promised to confer on the subject with the Grand Vizier, and to see what could be done.

The matter having been commented upon in the press, the Porte has caused it to be intimated to the newspapers that no such instruction had emanated from it, and that there was no intention of closing the schools.

This is no doubt satisfactory; but I should have thought it more so if I had not been aware not only that the order in question had been sent to the Governor-General of Syria by the Porte, but that it had been given in consequence of a formal decision come to by the Council of Ministers.

When the Governor awoke to the conviction of the feelings that it would provoke in various quarters, and more especially in Her Majesty's Government, it was considered best to deny that any order had been given, and to attribute the report to some misunderstanding on the part of the Syrian authorities.

It is, however, to be expected that the Porte will renew the demand that the schools conducted by foreigners, not only in Syria, but throughout the Empire, shall be subjected to Government inspection.

In my despatch No. 14 of the 5th of January of the present year, transmitting to Earl Granville a copy of the Porte's note on the subject, I observed that their right of supervision over schools in which the children of Ottoman subjects are educated appears undoubted, but, as is so often the case here, the project was likely to remain a dead letter, and it might be advisable to abstain from either assenting to or dissenting from the proposal.

If an answer should now be pressed for, it will not, I conceive, be possible to avoid consenting to it, with the reserve that no right is recognized to interference in the schools strictly confined to the education of foreign children.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 179.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, December 1, 1874

My Lord,

I BEG on behalf of the Council of the Alliance to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 30th ultimo, communicating that Ansairiyeh Christians had arrived at Damascus from Lattakia and Beyrout as military prisoners, and that through the representations made by Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Damascus Essad Pasha had promised to see that these men were not treated in an exceptional manner, and that they would have full liberty to follow the precepts of their religious faith.

Permit me to call your Lordship's attention to the following particulars recently communicated to the Alliance of the outrages committed upon these Christian men and upon others connected with the Mission in Lattakia and its vicinity:—

"In October last the Governor of Lattakia, having incited the villagers to violence, notwithstanding the protest made against such proceedings, ordered a regiment of soldiers to go into Kurdaha, near to Bahmra, where are the summer quarters of the missionaries, and where is the oldest mission school in this part of the country. A detachment went into the mission yard, broke in the doors of the schoolroom, and took out three members of the Christian Church and two others, being those who had escaped from Damascus in July last. These men have all been put into the army without the form of conscription and on no other pretext but that they were Christians. Their houses were surrounded by another detachment of soldiers, who had orders to burn them to the ground. Being built of stone and thickly roofed with earth the attempt failed, but the doors were broken open and the houses pillaged. Everything that could be carried off was removed and what remained was utterly destroyed. The wife of Salim, being a Christian woman and wearing Christian clothing, was fearfully beaten by the soldiers and cursed for her religion. Her clothes also were almost entirely torn from her person.

"While this was being enacted in one quarter of the village another body of soldiers surrounded the mission premises, scaled the walls and broke open the doors. They entered the bedroom of M. Gemdini, the Principal of the school, and tore the clothes from the bed in which his wife was lying at the time suffering from severe illness.

"The five Ansairiyeh Christians had their hands tied behind them and were marched to Kurdaha, where they were put in chains, beaten, cursed, derided, and spit on, because they were Christians. No other charge was brought against them.

"They were then marched, still in chains, to Lattakia, a distance of over nineteen miles, enduring the greatest sufferings on the journey."

I regret also to acquaint your Lordship that communications from Constantinople inform me that, notwithstanding the statement that Dawoud would be allowed Christian worship, all efforts up to the present time to bring him to public worship had been unsuccessful, and although the Grand Vizier assured Sir Henry Elliot that the Marash family at Smyrna were free to go anywhere except to their own district, they are in perfect ignorance as to any such liberty being allowed them.

I regret exceedingly to trouble your Lordship with a further extract from the letter of our correspondent to the following effect:—

"We have been engaged in this conflict now for more than a year, and as yet we have gained absolutely nothing from the Porte. Of denials, assurances, and hollow promises, we have had enough and too much, and the Turkish Government now more than ever seems determined to deprive the Moslem by any means of violence and cruelty of the benefits of Christianity, notwithstanding the Imperial edict and an official explanation given by Fuad Pasha at the time "that it extended expressly to all, including Mussulmans, though not mentioned by name."

I remain, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 180.

Lord Tenterden to the Earl of Shaftesbury.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, December 2, 1874.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 20th ultimo, with its inclosures, respecting the publication at Constantinople of a Turkish translation of the Bible.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 181.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 4, 1874.*

WITH reference to my letter of the 30th ultimo, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that a further report, dated the 15th ultimo, has been received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Damascus stating that four of the five Ansairiyeh Christians have been placed in the dragoon regiment, in which men of all religious denominations are serving, and that the fifth, who had drawn a blank conscription paper, has been dismissed and told that he is at liberty to return to his home.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 182.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 4, 1874.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that a telegram has been received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, stating that, in a conversation on the 28th ultimo about the reception by the Sultan of the deputation from the Evangelical Alliance, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs said that no engagement on the subject could be taken by the Porte beforehand, but he added that if the deputation came, he had no doubt that upon application the Sultan would receive the members.

It would be desirable, however, if the deputation decided upon coming, to alter the heading, which would be considered objectionable, and to correct the inaccuracies contained in some of its statements.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 183.

The Rev. J. Davis to Lord Tenterden.—(Received December 4.)

(Private.) *Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,*
Dear Lord Tenterden, *London, December 4, 1874.*

MY attention has been called to a telegram from Constantinople which appeared in the "Times" of Wednesday on the subject of the proposed deputation to the Sultan. The signatories to the address will be slow to act upon the information thus supplied until it is authenticated by Lord Derby. May I say that we are anxiously waiting for an official communication.

Very truly yours,
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

Inclosure in No. 183.

Extract from the "Times."

CHRISTIANS IN TURKEY.

(By Telegraph.)

(From our own Correspondent.)

Constantinople, December 1, 1874.

IN answer to an official announcement of the approaching arrival of a deputation from the Evangelical Alliance to solicit an audience of the Sultan, the Porte has intimated its opinion of the absence of any necessity for such a mission, inasmuch as its policy towards its Christian subjects has undergone no change, and the Porte has declined to engage itself to procure the audience.

No. 184.

*Lord Tenterden to the Rev. E. Hutchinson.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 4, 1874.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 25th ultimo, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to acquaint you that Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Damascus reported on the 15th ultimo that he had been informed by Essad Pasha that he had noticed with regret the statement in the European press that orders had been issued by his Government for the suppression of all Protestant schools in Syria. His Highness stated that there was no foundation for the statement, as schools might still be established on the observance of the same regulations as govern those already existing in Turkey.

Lord Derby has also received a despatch on this subject, dated the 20th ultimo, from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting that the matter having been commented upon in the press, the Porte had caused it to be intimated to the newspapers that no such instructions as that alleged had emanated from it, and that there was no intention of closing the schools.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 185.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 6, 1874.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant, respecting the treatment of the Ansairiyeh conscripts who had lately

* A similar letter was addressed to the Rev. J. Davis.

arrived at Damascus and of other Christians; and I am to inform you that a copy of your letter will be communicated to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 186.

The Rev. J. Davis to Lord Tenterden.—(Received December 5.)

(Private.) *Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, December 5, 1874.*

Dear Lord Tenterden,

MANY thanks for the important communications to-day.

I should be glad to receive a hint as to the corrections desirable to be made in the heading, &c., of the Address, which of course we wish to be as correct and acceptable as possible.

Truly yours,
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 187.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Dear Mr. Davis, *Foreign Office, December 5, 1874.*

IN reply to your letter of to-day, I can only tell you that the telegraphic message was repeated to you as we received it. I presume Sir H. Elliot will explain the alterations personally to the deputation.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 188.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 7.)

(No. 25. Political.)

My Lord, *Damascus, November 19, 1874.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch addressed this day by me to Sir Henry Elliot, reporting to his Excellency certain incidents that have occurred in Damascus and at Horus, and which have caused the native Christians to fear an attack from the Moslems.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 188.

Vice-Consul Green to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Damascus, November 19, 1874.*

I HAVE the honour to report that, the day before yesterday, some Christians came to me in considerable alarm and informed me that in the most crowded part of the bazaar a Derwish was shouting at the top of his voice the following words:—"The measure has now been filled to the brim; it needs to be cleaned until it is cleansed;" and that the Derwish was, at the same time, making signs with his hands, indicating in this country of the cutting of throats.

My informants told me that the Moslems understood the Derwish to be preaching against the Christians, and as this belief was confirmed to me by Mohammedans, I thought it proper to call upon the Acting Governor-General, Essad Pasha being absent at Tripoli, with reference to the riots at that place, and to urge him to have the Derwish arrested. The Naib Effendi thanked me for my action in the matter and promised to have my suggestion carried out.

Yesterday I was again visited by native Christians who came to relate to me the alarming accounts that had been received by them of a riot at Horus on the 9th instant, when three bodies of Mohammedans invaded the Christian quarter from separate directions and so frightened its inhabitants that they sought refuge in the churches and the buildings attached to them. The Moslems appear to have been excited by an endeavour of the Christians to obtain justice from the authorities for the murder of the guard of their quarter, who was shot down a few nights before, when opposing the escape of some thieves who had broken into a Christian house.

I also made a representation to the Naib Effendi on this subject, and he informed me that he had already directed the Lieutenant-Governor of the district to proceed at once in person to Horus from Hamah to institute an investigation into the cause of the disturbance and to punish the rioters.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 189.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No 304.)

My Lord, *Therapia, November 21, 1874.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 214, transmitting to me the copy of a further letter from the Evangelical Alliance respecting the Ansairiyeh Christians.

The Council of the Alliance have directed their Secretary to inform your Lordship that the communications received by them from the district in which these men were leading peaceful and useful lives without ferment or opposition on the part of the native population were quite inconsistent with my statement that they had been removed to Constantinople for their protection from the persecution they were suffering in Syria.

If your Lordship will have the goodness to cause a reference to be made to my despatches it will be seen that they do not bear the construction which has been put upon them, for certainly nothing could be further from my intention than to imply that these people had been removed from the scene of their useful occupations for their own protection.

It was long after the removal from those occupations, when they were stated to be subjected to cruel maltreatment from the military authorities at Damascus, that, in order to withdraw them from it, I advocated their transfer to Constantinople, where I was certain of being able to exercise a beneficial influence in their favour, if renewed acts of cruelty were reported to me.

I stated this in my despatch, but I never as much as hinted that in the district from which the conscripts were brought there was on the part of the population a hostility which rendered their removal desirable for their own protection.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 190.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 305.)

My Lord, *Therapia, November 22, 1874.*

IN transmitting to me, by your despatch No. 205, the copy of a letter from the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, respecting the Ansairiyeh converts, your Lordship has directed my special attention to that portion of it from which it appeared that the promise given by the Turkish authorities respecting the soldier Daoud had not been kept.

I presume that it is the promise respecting the conscript's freedom to attend divine worship which is alluded to, upon which point I must refer your Lordship to my despatch No. 189 of September 13th, reporting that, although there had been some delay in giving the necessary orders, the only difficulty in the matter had proceeded latterly, not from the military authorities, but from the want of any service conducted in a language which Daoud understands.

Messrs. Magill and Rogers observe, in their letter to your Lordship, that the point of the case of the Ansairiyehs is that the men were arrested for being converts, and that

Daoud, contrary to law, is undergoing penal servitude in the army for holding firm by his profession of Christianity.

Your Lordship is, however, aware of the inaccuracy of that statement.

The complaint against the Porte was that the men, having become Christians, were treated precisely as if they had not been converted, and that they were enrolled in the army in spite of, but not in consequence of, their conversion.

It is equally incorrect to say that Daoud is undergoing penal servitude in the army for holding firm to his religion, for if he had recanted at once he would still have had to serve his time like other soldiers.

The suggestion that a substitute might be got for Daoud, as is done for so many others, is looked upon as offensive to the religious instincts of Christendom, and it is supposed that the conscript, being "free-born," would not consent so to purchase his freedom; but it might be remembered that the system of providing substitutes has long been in force in almost every Christian State in Europe, and also that Daoud, like every soldier in the Turkish army, although born free, was by birth, like them, liable to the conscription.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 191.

Sir. H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 311.)
Therapia, November 25, 1874.

My Lord,

I LOST no time in forwarding to Aarify Pasha the substance of your Lordship's telegram of the 21st instant, informing me of the wish of a deputation of the Evangelical Alliance to present an Address to the Sultan on the religious persecution supposed to be going on in Turkey, and I requested his Excellency to enable me as soon as possible to reply to your Lordship by telegraph.

I last night received from him the inclosed extract of a telegram, by which he has sent his answer to Musurus Pasha.

It leaves little ground for expecting that the Sultan will grant the deputation an audience, and the title and wording of the Address, of which a copy has been given to me by the Agent of the Alliance, will not, when they are known at the Porte, help to remove the difficulty.

Before I received your Lordship's telegram an intimation of the intention of the Evangelical Alliance had appeared in the telegraphic announcements of the local newspapers, and Aarify Pasha asked me what the alleged religious persecution was.

I could not but answer that I knew of nothing which could with any justice be so designated, although the case of the converts from Marash unfortunately afforded one undoubted instance in which a family had been treated cruelly and as criminals for no other reason than their adoption of the Christian religion.

The parents were still deprived of their children, no punishment had been inflicted on those who had ill-treated them, and this case, therefore, might correctly be said to be one of religious persecution.

I did not allude to the hardship of their being refused permission to return to Marash, for my information has not at all satisfied me that they could do so without risk both to themselves and to public order.

Although these people were in the first instance banished to Smyrna, your Lordship is aware that I almost immediately afterwards obtained from the Grand Vizier the assurance that they need not consider themselves obliged to remain there, and that they might go where they pleased, except to Marash.

The case of the Ansairiyehs is the only other one alluded to in the address, and I am convinced that, if the facts had been represented as they really occurred, the distinguished persons who have signed it would not have seen in them a case of religious persecution, and would still less have endorsed the statement that they had been enrolled in the Turkish army on their refusal to abjure the Christian faith.

In none of the communications, either in writing or in person, made to me here by those who have deeply interested themselves in the case of these men had the latter statement ever been hinted at.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 191.

Aarifi Pasha to Musurus Pasha.

(Télégraphique.)
(Extrait.)
Le 24 Novembre, 1874.

EN réponse à la question de savoir si la députation que l'Alliance Evangélique se propose d'envoyer à Constantinople sera reçue par le Sultan, la Sublime Porte déclare réserver ce point à la volonté de Sa Majesté, qui en décidera en temps et lieu.

Pour ce qui est de la mission en elle-même, il n'y a pas lieu d'en espérer quelque résultat pratique, le Gouvernement Impérial n'ayant pas l'intention de modifier en rien la ligne de conduite éminemment libérale qu'il a constamment suivie à l'égard des divers cultes professés dans l'Empire.

No. 192.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 315.)
Therapia, November 26, 1874.

My Lord,

THE Vekil, or Chief of the native Protestants in Turkey, called upon me this morning, and put into my hands a Memorandum enumerating various grievances of which the community with just cause complain.

The Memorandum, which, going into many details of particular cases, is too long for transmission to your Lordship, states that the want of adequate "acknowledgment of the Protestants prevents that freedom of audience with the local authorities which is necessary for their protection, and for enabling them to oppose the oppressive interference by the privileged religions of other communities."

The letters from the Provinces establish the fact that the orders from the Porte in favour of the Protestants, not being sufficiently stringent in their terms, are invariably disregarded, and often do more harm than good.

The inclosed Memorandum, given me by the Vekil, contains the suggestions which he wishes to be made to the Porte for giving the community the position to which it is entitled, and which are so fair and reasonable that I propose to submit them to the Porte, and to give them my utmost support.

The German Ambassador, who has already expressed his readiness to act with me in matters affecting the Protestants, will, I have little doubt, cordially co-operate with me on this occasion.

The Vekil being in correspondence with members of his community in every part of the Empire, has probably better means than anyone else of being informed of any religious persecution which may be going on, and I availed myself of his visit to enquire whether there was any to be complained of.

His answer was a distinct negative.

There was, he said, nothing of the nature of a persecution of Christians by the authorities; but there was, as he had before said, a very decided sectarian persecution by the more powerful communities, which encouraged the authorities in acts of harshness towards any one of the obnoxious and uninfluential class of Protestants.

There had been the Marash case, but it was an isolated instance.

I next spoke to him about the Ansairiyeh converts, and their right as Christians to exemption from the conscription, and he answered without hesitation not only that they had no such right, but that he would extremely deplore its being conceded to converts.

I confess that I was at first surprised by this view of the question as coming from him; but he pointed out that the inevitable result of the recognition of the principle of exemption upon such grounds would be the nominal profession of Christianity by multitudes among the numerous races of this Empire, who, like the Ansiriyeh, can hardly be said to have a religion at all, and that nothing would grieve him so much as to see them enrolled in his community.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 192.

Memorandum.

AS it has been suggested that the means should be pointed out, which the Protestants would recommend the Government to adopt in order to relieve them from the grievances, of which they now complain, the following are respectfully submitted:—

1. That in view of rumours circulated in several parts of the country, to the effect that the Protestants are not a recognised community of this Empire, Vizirial letters should be sent to all the provinces, recognizing the Protestants as an authorized community, and declaring that they shall individually and collectively be protected in the enjoyment of all the rights and privileges granted to the other communities of the Empire.

2. That, as it is contrary to the principles of Protestantism to confer secular powers on spiritual office-bearers, the Government should authorize the appointment of a layman as Vekil in every Protestant community, and should invest him with all the powers, representative and judicial, and all the honours and privileges of audience, that are bestowed on the spiritual chiefs of the other communities. Without this, the Protestant Vekils will not be able to maintain their position in opposition to the other communities.

3. Lastly, it is indispensably necessary that the Protestants should have seats in all the administrative and judicial councils of the Empire, both in the provinces and at the capital, that their office-bearers should be enumerated whenever those of the other communities are mentioned, and that proper accommodation at the Sublime Porte, and similar honours and distinctions as are enjoyed by the chiefs of the other communities, be conferred on the Protestant Vekil at Constantinople, and thus prove that he and the community he represents enjoy the confidence, favour, and protection of their Imperial Sovereign.

No. 193.

Musurus Pasha to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

My Lord, *Ambassade Impériale Ottomane, Londres, le 7 Décembre*, 1874.

A LA réception de la lettre que votre Excellence m'a fait l'honneur de m'adresser en date du 28 du mois dernier, je me suis empressé de télégraphier à son Excellence Aarifi Pacha pour le prier de me mettre à même de communiquer à votre Excellence la décision définitive de la Sublime Porte sur l'audience sollicitée en faveur d'une députation que l'Alliance Evangélique se propose d'envoyer à Constantinople avec mission de présenter une adresse à Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

J'ai l'honneur d'informer maintenant votre Excellence qu'il résulte d'une dépêche télégraphique que je viens de recevoir de son Excellence Aarifi Pacha, que le Gouvernement Impérial, n'ayant pas connaissance du texte de l'adresse dont il s'agit, n'est pas en position de donner une réponse définitive à la demande de l'Alliance Evangélique.

Quant au désir de votre Excellence de savoir s'il y a objection à ce que la dépêche télégraphique précédente de son Excellence Aarifi Pacha du 25 du mois dernier soit communiquée à l'Alliance Evangélique, j'ai l'honneur de lui répondre que je ne vois aucune objection à une telle communication, qui, au contraire, pourra servir à éclairer cette Société sur l'inutilité de sa démarche.

J'ai l'honneur, &c.
(Signé) MUSURUS.

No. 194.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 9.)

(No. 328.)
My Lord, *Therapia, November 29*, 1874.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Lordship's telegram of this day, directing me to endeavour to obtain a definitive answer from the Porte in reference to the wish of the Evangelical Alliance that a deputation of their members should be granted an audience by the Sultan.

I had yesterday spoken to Aarifi Pasha on the subject, when his Excellency said that the Porte could take no engagement beforehand, but that he did not doubt that, if the deputation arrived, the Sultan would, upon my application, receive the members of it.

The Ministers are, of course, unable to take any engagement without previously ascertaining the Sultan's pleasure, and they appear to wish to avoid this necessity till the deputation arrives.

If it should come it would, in my opinion, be desirable that the heading or title of the address should be so far altered as to remove what might appear to be offensive in its present designation as an address on the subject of religious persecution in Turkey.

An address on the position of the Christian subjects of the Sultan would have been less unfavourably looked upon, and if it should be possible to modify some of the statements, which, as will be seen from my previous despatches, are not in conformity with what I believe to be the true facts of the case as regards the Ansairiyehs, it would, I think, be very desirable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 195.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 9.)

(No. 324.)
My Lord, *Therapia, November 29*, 1874.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship, with reference to my despatch No. 297 of the 15th instant, that the American Minister expresses himself as quite satisfied with the disposition of the Porte in regard to the late proceedings of the Syrian authorities in entering the American missionary domicile in searching for deserters.

Before Mr. Baker had made any complaint on the subject, I had informed the Grand Vizier of the occurrence, and I had recommended his Highness to take the initiative in saying that it should be investigated and properly dealt with.

He took the communication in very good part, and, thanking me for it, acted on the suggestion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 196.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 9.)

(No. 312.)
My Lord, *Therapia, November 25*, 1874.

I HAVE the honour to inclose the copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Mr. Consul-General Eldridge in reply to a despatch, of which he sent a copy to your Lordship, requesting instructions in reference to a notification that members of non-Christian sects liable to the conscription do not become exempted from service by embracing Christianity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 196.

Sir H. Elliot to Consul-General Eldridge.

Sir, *Therapia, November 25*, 1874.

I HAVE received your despatch inclosing an official notification that members of non-Christian sects liable to conscription will not be exempted from service on embracing Christianity, except upon the payment of the regular tax for exemption.

In reply to your request to be instructed whether you are to consider this notification as having the adhesion of Her Majesty's Government, and whether you are to abstain from interfering in such cases as may arise out of it, I have to observe that no adhesion or sanction from Her Majesty's Government appears necessary in reference to a notice of this nature, and that no interference on your part would be proper, provided the convert

conscripts are fairly taken by lot, like the rest of their countrymen who had not changed their religion.

If, on the other hand, you should have reason to believe that they were arbitrarily called to military service on account of their having embraced Christianity, you will at once draw the attention of the Governor-General to what would constitute an unjustifiable irregularity, and unofficially remonstrate against it, reporting the circumstance to me at the same time.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 197.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 11, 1874.

WITH reference to my letter of the 4th instant, respecting the reception by the Sultan of the deputation from the Evangelical Alliance, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to transmit to you, for the information of the Council of the Alliance, the accompanying copies of correspondence which has taken place between his Lordship and the Turkish Ambassador at this Court on that subject.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 198.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 12.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,
My Lord, *London, December* 11, 1874.

I AM desired by the Council of this Alliance to thank your Lordship for the communications made to them in the letters of Lord Tenterden of the 4th instant, and to express the gratification with which they have heard that it has been authoritatively denied, both at Damascus and Constantinople, that there was any foundation for the statement that orders had been issued by the Turkish Government for the suppression of Protestant schools in Syria. The Council also feeling a deep interest, in common with their fellow Christians in all lands, in the progress of sound and Christian education, rejoice to hear that schools may still be established throughout Turkey, on the observance of the same regulations as govern those already existing in that land.

With reference to the report received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Damascus on the subject of the five Ansairiyeh Christians who had been brought as military prisoners to Damascus, I am requested to call your Lordship's attention to the circumstances narrated in my letter of the 1st instant, viz., their arrest in the district of Lattakia, the sudden and violent attack made by the Turkish soldiers on the mission and school premises, the destruction of property, the treatment of the owners (including some women), and the forced and, as it would appear, illegal enlistment of some of the men into the Turkish army at the time they were statedly engaged in teaching. If, as the Council are informed, this forced military service is avowedly in consequence of the Christian profession made by these men, and notwithstanding the legal exemption of such persons as are heads of families, or are engaged in teaching, or who are willing to pay an exemption tax, then there would appear to be an infliction of wrongs upon these unoffending men, calling for the sympathy and remonstrance of their fellow Christians, and of the friends of justice and humanity everywhere.

The Council desire me further to call your Lordship's attention to the circumstance mentioned in Lord Tenterden's letter of the 30th ultimo, that these Ansairiyeh Christians were brought to Damascus as military prisoners, but for what cause they were treated as prisoners is not shown, nor is it even alleged that resistance had been offered, or that any charge of misconduct had been brought against them, nor does it appear that any conscription for the army was taking place in that district at the time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

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* No. 167, Inclosure in No. 191, and No. 193.

No. 199.

The Rev. J. Davis to Lord Tenterden.—(Received December 11.)

(Private.) *Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,*
Dear Lord Tenterden, *London, December* 11, 1874.

PERMIT me to inform you that the Address to the Sultan has been engrossed, mounted, and suitably prepared for presentation to His Majesty, and that in a few days probably, immediately after Christmas, our deputation will leave for Constantinople.

I beg to thank you for mentioning to Lord Derby the suggestion I ventured to make about being allowed the honour of submitting the Address to the Queen for Her Majesty's inspection. Should Her Majesty be pleased to grant me the honour of an audience for the purpose, this mark of Royal favour would be a most valuable service to the object which is having the sympathy and combined support of Protestants of many lands.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) J. DAVIS.

No. 200.

The Rev. E. Hutchinson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 14.)

Church Missionary House, 16, Salisbury Square,
My Lord, *December* 14, 1874.

BY order of the Committee of the Church Missionary Society, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship the accompanying Memorial and Memorandum on religious intolerance in Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ED. HUTCHINSON, *Secretary.*

Inclosure 1 in No. 200.

Memorial from the Church Missionary Society.

To the Right Honourable the Earl of Derby, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Memorial of the Most Reverend the Vice-Patron, the Right Honourable the President, Vice-Presidents, and Committee of the Church Missionary Society.

YOUR Memorialists would respectfully submit, for your Lordship's consideration that when, in 1856, the Sultan of Turkey conceded the Hatti-Humayoun, they were encouraged to extend their operations in the Ottoman Empire. Knowing, as they did, that this charter of religious liberty had been granted at the urgent requisition of England and France, in consideration of the enormous sacrifices these Christian Powers had made in support of the Ottoman Empire, your Memorialists had full reliance that the diplomatic engagements entered into by Turkey would be respected; and although they have since been compelled in some cases to complain of the violent and arbitrary proceedings of Turkish officials, your Memorialists would acknowledge with thankfulness that your Lordship's predecessors in office have intervened with such good effect, that not only redress has been afforded to those who have suffered religious persecution, but, as in the case referred to in the Foreign Office despatch dated December 14, 1861, the Turkish Government were called upon to give fresh assurances that religious freedom should "not hereafter be assailed or restricted."

Your Memorialists are sorry to be obliged to solicit once again intervention in their behalf. In furtherance of the work in which the Christian Missionary Society is engaged it has been their practice, not only in the Ottoman Empire, but in other parts of the world, to establish schools, which are open to those who are willing to attend. Several schools have in this way been established by them in Palestine, and carried on for some years, not only without opposition of any kind, but to the marked satisfaction of the people, who frequently apply to the missionaries to open fresh schools. In

accordance with a request of this nature a school has been recently opened by the Church Missionary Society at Acco, and your Memorialists have now to complain that this school was suddenly closed in an arbitrary manner by order of the Turkish Governor-General of Syria. It is the first time that the Turkish Government has closed a school in Palestine, and, as to the plea advanced that it should not have been opened without official permission, it is sufficient to state that such permission has not been required either in the case of schools opened by other denominations in Syria or of those belonging to the Church Missionary Society. It may be added that the opening of the new school at Acco had the concurrence of the Protestant Bishop of Jerusalem, agreeably to the terms of the Hatti-Humayoun.

Your Memorialists would further submit for your Lordship's consideration that this is no isolated case of unwarrantable interference with the work carried on by Protestant missionaries in Turkey; for, as your Lordship may have been informed through other channels, three native Protestant teachers of a school at Lattakia were suddenly seized, subjected to ill-treatment, and, on their refusal to abjure the Christian faith, were forcibly enrolled in the Turkish army, although by the practice in the Ottoman Empire they were not liable to military service, having paid the regular tax in lieu of service, and further, as teachers, having a claim to exemption. If under these circumstances Greek and Latin native Christians are not considered liable to military service, it is not unreasonable to ask why native Protestants, who are moreover teachers of schools, should be dealt with in an exceptional manner.

Again, your Memorialists would refer to another case, of which they have information from the Rev. R. H. Weakley, one of this Society's missionaries, in which a man named Mustapha, of Marash, his wife and son, have been imprisoned in consequence of their profession of Christianity, and when eventually released, they have not been allowed to return home, but have been placed under surveillance at Smyrna; meanwhile, Mustapha's three younger children are kept at Marash in a Mohammedan family, and compelled to attend a Mohammedan school.

It is true that the sufferers referred to here are members of congregations to which American missionaries minister, still on this account they are not the less entitled to support and sympathy, and your Memorialists would urge, that if the Turkish officials find that they can persecute with impunity those who have embraced the Protestant faith in one part of the Empire, they may not be slow to adopt the same policy towards those converts with whom your Memorialists are immediately connected. Indeed, indications of such a policy are apparent in the closing of the school at Acco, and also in the hindrances which are now, for the first time, in the way of printing the Holy Scriptures in the Turkish language. On this subject the Rev. Robert H. Weakley writes as follows:—"With regard to the printing of the Turkish Scriptures, we are told, after ten years of unquestioned liberty to print Scriptures and books concerning the Scriptures, that a special licence is necessary."

Your Memorialists would respectfully, but very earnestly, represent that all the acts referred to above are in direct violation of the very letter as well as of the spirit of the Hatti-Humayoun, and of the diplomatic engagements into which the Porte has entered with Great Britain. In a despatch dated January 9, 1856, to Lord Clarendon, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe wrote as follows on the advantages which would follow on the adoption by the Turkish Government of a more enlightened policy in place of the traditional exclusiveness which had previously characterized the administration of the Ottoman Empire:—

"We all in turn expressed a desire to bring the various classes of the Sultan's subjects into harmony and confidence with each other as a source of prosperity to the Empire, whose Government would find its advantages, both internally and externally, in acting no longer on the principles of religious exclusiveness or predominance of race, but on those broader, sounder maxims which have only to be carried out with perseverance in order to produce a full measure of national unity and strength."

Your Memorialists, therefore, conceive that, in protesting against the reactionary policy which the Turkish Government have thought fit to adopt, they are consulting the best interests of the Turkish Empire, whilst at the same time it is obvious that without religious liberty the work in which your Memorialists are engaged cannot but be seriously hindered and impeded.

(Signed) A. C. CANTUAR, *Vice-Patron.*
CHICHESTER, *President.*

(And 13 others.)

Church Missionary House, November 24, 1874.

Inclosure 2 in No. 200.

Statement respecting Religious Persecution in Turkey.

[See Inclosure 2 in No. 166.]

No. 201.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 267.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 15, 1874.*

I APPROVE the advice which your Excellency gave to the Grand Vizier with regard to the late proceedings of the Syrian authorities in entering the American missionary domicile in searching for deserters, as reported in your despatch No. 324 of the 29th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 202.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 15, 1874.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, stating that the address which the deputation proposed to submit to the Sultan is ready for presentation, and that the deputation have arranged to leave for Constantinople directly after Christmas.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 203.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 15, 1874.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, upon the subject of the treatment of the Ansairiyeh Christians, a copy of which will be forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 204.

Lord Tenterden to the Revs. W. Magill and J. Rogers.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 18, 1874.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that a copy of your letter of the 27th of October last, respecting the Ansairiyeh Christians, was transmitted to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and his Excellency's special attention was called to that portion of it from which it appeared that the promise given by the Turkish authorities respecting the soldier Daoud had not been kept.

His Excellency, in a despatch just received, presumes that it is the promise respecting the conscripts' freedom to attend divine worship to which you allude, and he reports that although there had been some delay in giving the necessary orders, the only difficulty in the matter had proceeded latterly not from the military authorities, but from the want of any service conducted in a language which Daoud understands.

Sir H. Elliot adds that it is incorrect to say that Daoud is undergoing penal servitude

in the army for holding firm to his religion, for if he had recanted at once he would still have had to serve his time like other soldiers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 205.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. E. Hutchinson.

Foreign Office, December 19, 1874.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, respecting religious intolerance in Turkey, and inclosing a Memorial and Memorandum on the subject; and I am to request that you will be so good as to forward to me duplicate copies of these papers, in order that they may be communicated to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 206.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 342.)

Therapia, December 11, 1874.

My Lord,

AFTER all that has been said of late about the religious persecution supposed to be going on in this country, I venture to forward to your Lordship a further Memorandum from the chief of the Protestant community upon the position of converts from Mohammedanism, and their treatment by the Imperial Government.

I would repeat that there is no one so well qualified as this gentleman to speak with authority upon the subject. It is his duty, from which he does not shrink, to represent to the Porte every complaint which arrives from members of his community from all parts of the Empire, and his evidence may be received with entire confidence.

In the conversation which I had with him when he gave me this paper, he gave me some details respecting the man Mustapha of Marash, whose case has been so prominently brought forward.

It appears that he is no recent convert, but remained with his wife as Christians some time at Constantinople about ten or twelve years ago, and he would have continued to live here if any means had been found for letting him earn the barest livelihood, for he dreaded going back to Marash, on account of the known fanaticism of the people.

After some time, that which he had anticipated occurred, and being assailed by the fanatics he was taken by the authorities and sent to Aleppo, but not a word can be said in justification of his having been treated as a criminal both on the road and on his first arrival here.

The Protestant Vekil attributes what has occurred in his case, and in that of the other man Ahmed, mentioned in the Memorandum, as entirely due to their not having on their baptism assumed a Christian name.

Each of them is called by one of the seven names given to the Prophet as specially marking some of his attributes, and the Turks resent those names being borne by a renegade, and it is difficult to see what is to be gained by courting this resentment instead of acting as the majority of the converts do.

I have learnt from another source some rather curious details bearing upon the taking of recruits for the military service from non-Mussulman populations.

It seems that in Lhazistan, in Asia Minor, there is a population always known to be Christians, but who did not make any public profession of that faith till after the Crimean War; and the rule which followed in regard to them has been that such of them as were born before their parents professed themselves Christians were obliged to serve, while those born after their parents' profession were exempt.

According to this rule the enforcement of the conscription in the case of the Ansairiyeh converts seems to have been perfectly in accordance with existing practice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 206.

Memorandum.

WHEN Protestant missions were first introduced into this country, their general work, and their agents, or missionaries, for many years, were regarded not only as harmless, but even as benevolent, and their followers were looked upon with no feeling of animosity. As soon, however, as they began to organize religious bodies, and take aggressive steps, this at once excited sectarian hatred, and raised persecution against the followers of those who could no more be expelled from the country. This, however, did not last very long, on account of the prompt repressive measures adopted by the Imperial Government.

These measures were intended to give full liberty to the Protestants, and indeed, went far in giving character and influence to Protestantism itself. All the subsequent events which led to the present state of things, are so well known to your Excellency, that I do not deem it necessary to repeat them here.

I now pass to the second point, perhaps not so well known, viz., to the question whether converts from Islamism to Christianity are allowed liberty of conscience, or persecuted.

As far as actual facts go, there are instances in which proselytes were more or less subjected to injury, while, on the contrary, there are many more instances in which the greatest toleration was practised towards them. Indeed, Christian proselytism among the Musulmans has not yet assumed such a magnitude as either to excite persecution or claim the right of being recognized as a body; as it stands at the present day, it consists of a few isolated cases, each of which must of necessity be judged by itself, and on its own merits.

Of all the Mohammedans baptized, who, as far as I know, are from ten to fifteen in number, Selim Effendi was the first; he was christened in Malta as Edward Williams, together with his wife and children. This man was allowed to profess his new faith in the boldest manner. He even preached Christ to his nation as freely and as publicly as the most zealous advocate of religious toleration could wish. Yet, I do not know if he was ever annoyed beyond a few hours detention. Kruir, once the bold and active colporteur, is even now practising law in the various Courts of the Government; and although he makes no secret of his religious faith, yet he has never been molested for it. Hanneli Effendi, nephew of Kiamil P., President of the Council of State, was baptized, retaining his Mussulman name; but not very long after he returned to his former persuasion, his relatives having some way or the other taken offence at the missionaries.

Shakir Effendi, another convert, died in his own family, and was buried as a Moslem.

Mahmud was married to an English lady in England, and entered the service of the Propagation Society. He died a Christian, and was never interfered with by the Government.

Martui and Ali were Persian converts, and both proved worthless.

Aali Effendi, while employed in the Protestant Chancery, became baptized; but now he is as good a Moslem as any of his non-baptized countrymen.

Mustafa, of Marash, was here twelve years ago, with his wife and children,—a good Christian indeed; but neither friends nor enemies taking much notice of him, he was obliged to return to Marash.

Ahmed, of Cesarea, was baptized, with his wife and children; but after some years he was exiled to Adrianople during the agitation which prevailed, provoked by an incorrect rumour that 75,000 Moslems had embraced Protestantism.

Melhon, the renegade (convert from Mohammedanism), with his Moslem wife and children, born in Islamism, though arrested, and even detained a few days, was yet soon released; and now he is as free as any man, having his wife and children by him.

Abraham, baptized by the Armenians, is very well known as such by his countrymen, but he has never complained of being persecuted; several others have been baptized by the Armenians; possibly as many others by the Greeks and Roman Catholics; but we have not heard of any serious annoyance being suffered by any of them.

Both Government and people know perfectly well that there are places opened in this city where Christian religious service is held, expressly for Mohammedan converts; and yet no one has ever heard of their being attacked, or otherwise molested.

Colportage and other missionary operations have been going on as freely as could be allowed in any civilized country. However, some recent events, and their causes, are so well known to your Excellency, that I could not venture to add my own meagre statement to them.

As to the question of the registration of converts from Islamism in our own books, allow me to state that although the fact of our Firman merely authorizes us to receive those who separate themselves from the jurisdiction of the Patriarchs, still we have registered the whole of the above-mentioned. Williams' family, who even hold property under their new names, although his real character is very well known by all concerned.

Kutor is likewise registered in our own books, as also Melhon the renegade. But as to registering Ahmed, Mahmud, or Mustafa, under their Mussulman names, we have good reason to hesitate; for to propose to register Christian Ahmed in the Government register, of which ours is but a copy, would imply, on our part, an unnecessary freedom, especially when the responsible party has not been consulted previously.

I hope your Excellency will not blame us if we question the soundness of the policy of retaining Mohammedan names in the converts, whose registration as such would excite the jealousy and ill-will of the dominant race against our community so ill protected; while, on the other hand, the refusal to register these converts puts them in the position of outlaws. Now, what imaginable good could overbalance the certain calamity which would thus be invited?

Indeed, if other people can afford to put to test their own extreme rights, they should do it at their own expense; we, on our part, do not feel prepared to overtask the clemency of the Imperial Government where there is a way to avoid it. Those who have put the Christian Ahmed in the position of an outlaw are themselves answerable for it.

As for the military service, which has been occasioning so many complaints, your Excellency may be aware that soon after the proclaiming of the Hatti-Houmayoun, the capitation tax ("haraj") was abolished upon the principle of equality; consequently, the Christian subjects of His Majesty the Sultan came virtually under the same military obligations to which Moslems were subjected. However, through an understanding between the Sublime Porte and the Chiefs of the Christian communities, the following arrangement was made, viz., that, reckoning one out of 180 of the male population liable to military service, they agreed to pay 5,000 piastres, the amount fixed for exemption for every 180 men, or 28 piastres per head, to be distributed and collected by each community among its own members. In this way it is clear that the Government has nothing to do whatever with the individual thus taxed. From the character of this tax it is evident that this regulation is not applicable in the case of those who were already exempt from the capitation tax, and, as Moslems, were enjoying the advantages of the dominant race, and subjected to military service, the Sublime Porte not having taken any engagement towards them. However, your Excellency can best judge whether they could claim exemption upon religious grounds unless the Porte should impose upon them duties which are inconsistent with their Christian faith and obligations.

In regard to the right of proselyte parents to their children under age, the law of the Koran is very distinct. It says: "If any non-Moslem embrace Islamism, his children under age become at once Mussulmans, though one of his parents remain a non-Moslem."

As to whether the offspring of renegades (converts from Mohammedanism) should be left in charge of their parents or not, the Shiriyat, as far as I could ascertain, is silent on the point, for it does not suppose any such persons to be living, as all renegades are *de facto* condemned to be beheaded.

But now that the head of the renegade is spared, and he is allowed to live by the power of Treaties, whether this would restore to him his natural right upon his offspring or not, my scanty knowledge does not allow me to say more upon the question.

No. 207.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 269.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 21, 1874.

I APPROVE the course which your Excellency proposed to take with regard to the suggestions made by the Protestant Vekil for the redress of the grievances complained of by his community, as reported in your despatch No. 315 of the 26th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 208.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 271.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 21, 1874.

I HAVE to approve the despatch addressed by your Excellency to Mr. Eldridge, a copy of which was inclosed in your despatch No. 312 of the 25th ultimo, with reference to the notification that members of non-Christian sects liable to the conscription do not become exempted from service by embracing Christianity.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 209.

The Rev. E. Hutchinson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

Church Missionary House, 16, *Salisbury Square*,
My Lord, *December* 21, 1874.

I AM directed by the Committee to thank your Lordship for your letter of the 4th instant, informing us that his Highness Issad Pasha has stated to Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Damascus that there was no foundation for the statement that orders had been issued by the Turkish Government for the suppression of all Protestant schools in Syria, and further informing us that, on the 20th ultimo, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople had reported that the Porte had intimated through the press that there was no intention of closing the schools.

The closing of the Society's school at Acco took place on the 3rd of September last, as detailed in the letter of the Rev. J. Zeller to Mr. Eldridge, the Consul-General at Damascus; and although some time must have elapsed since the attention of His Highness Issad Pasha was called to the subject, we have not, up to the present time, heard from Mr. Zeller that permission has been granted to reopen the school.

I also have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 19th instant, in compliance with which I beg to forward duplicate copies of the Memorial and Memorandum forwarded on the 14th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDW. HUTCHINSON, *Secretary*,
Church Missionary Society.

No. 210.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 293.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 4, 1874.

I FORWARD to your Excellency the inclosed Memorial addressed to you by the British and Foreign Bible Society,* with respect to the sale and distribution of the Bible in Turkey; and I have to request your Excellency to inform me how this matter now stands.

Her Majesty's Government trust that the question has already been satisfactorily settled.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 211.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1875.)

(No. 366.)
My Lord, *Therapia. December* 23, 1874.

I HAVE learnt incidentally that the children of the convert Mostafa of Marash had, with the connivance of the authorities, been enabled to join their parents at Smyrna.

* Already sent to Sir H. Elliot by Lord Shaftesbury; see No. 162.

Not having been informed of this fact by those who had first represented the case to me, I was continuing to urge upon the Porte the hardship of maintaining the separation, without being aware that the grievance was already removed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 212.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, January 4, 1875.

THE Rev. James Davis presents his compliments to the Earl of Derby, and begs to inclose his Lordship copies of the address to the Sultan as amended and prepared for presentation. Copies have also been forwarded to Constantinople.

Inclosure in No. 212.

To His Imperial Majesty the Sultan Abdul Aziz Khan.

May it please your Majesty,

THE undersigned Memorialists, members of different nationalities, and of various Christian Churches united in the Evangelical Alliance by the bonds of a common faith, venture to approach your Imperial Majesty with the expression of their highest respect.

They gratefully acknowledge the valuable concessions made to the cause of civil and religious liberty, which have shown the enlightened sentiments of your Imperial Government. They refer especially with much satisfaction to a declaration made on a former occasion to the representative of Great Britain that "henceforward neither shall Christianity be insulted in my dominions, nor shall Christians be in any way persecuted for their religion;" and to the subsequent Hatti-Sheriff, declaring that "no subject of His Majesty the Sultan shall be hindered in the exercise of the religion that he professes, nor shall be in any way molested on that account." The proclamation of a policy so eminently just and liberal was welcomed by all the friends of the Ottoman Empire, not only as affording a substantial basis for the more intimate alliance between that Empire and foreign Christian Powers, but also as affording a sure ground of hope for the future prosperity of the Empire itself.

Your Memorialists have learned, however, with feelings of deep regret that in some recent instances your Majesty's benevolent intentions have been frustrated, and that the adoption of the Christian faith by some of your Majesty's subjects has, contrary to the above-mentioned Hatti-Scheriff, been visited with cruel treatment on the part of certain Provincial Magistrates, who have thus acted in opposition to your Majesty's righteous and benevolent declarations.

They allude to the cases already brought before your Majesty's Government.

Three Ansairiyeh converts to Christianity, who had been living peaceable and blameless lives as teachers in a Christian mission school, were, in September 1873, suddenly seized and sent to Damascus, where they were thrown into prison, and (we are credibly informed), whilst there, repeatedly beaten, reviled, denied food and drink, and otherwise cruelly treated. No crime or offence against the law was charged against them, but on their refusal to abjure the Christian faith they were compulsorily enrolled in the army and refused the exercise of Christian worship.

Your Memorialists are informed that, in consequence of representations made on behalf of these converts, orders have been given for their removal to Constantinople; but such removal, whilst affording possibly some amelioration to their condition, would nevertheless involve banishment from their homes and families, and from the honourable employments in which they were engaged.

Another case is that of a father and son, who, because they avowed themselves Christians, were taken by the police from their homes at Marash, bound, and brought under a guard to Aleppo, from whence they were subsequently removed to Constantinople and put in prison. They have since, with the wife and three younger children, been banished to Smyrna, and forbidden to return to their home at Marash.

Your Memorialists feel constrained to submit to your Majesty's notice these points of injurious treatment of individuals for exercising their personal right to believe and

worship according to their own free conscience: treatment so contrary to your Majesty's intentions, and so much at variance with the enlightened sentiments of civilized nations.

Assured of your Majesty's benevolent disposition, and mindful of the gracious reception which deputations from this Society have received on previous occasions from European and Oriental Sovereigns, and the gratifying results arising therefrom, your Memorialists feel encouraged to approach your Imperial Majesty on the present occasion. They humbly, but earnestly, entreat that such measures may be taken as may appear to your Majesty most fitting to redress the wrongs inflicted on your Majesty's Christian subjects, as above mentioned; and that the officers of your Majesty's Government, in the Provinces and elsewhere, may be charged to preserve free from molestation, and secure in the enjoyment of their religious privileges, any individuals whomsoever, professing Christianity, over whom, by your Majesty's appointment, they exercise authority.

(Signatures follow.)

No. 213.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, January , 1875.

My Lord,

I AM instructed by the Council of this Alliance to thank your Lordship for the letter, dated the 11th instant, accompanying copies of correspondence which have taken place between your Lordship and the Turkish Ambassador at this Court.

The Council desire me to express their deep regret that the Turkish Government, either through want of accurate information of the facts connected with the outrages committed on the Christian converts both at Lattakia and at Marash, or through a disinclination to admit their responsibility, persist in a denial of the persecution clearly involved in the sufferings endured by these Christian men and their families.

The Council, with the evidence before them, borne out by satisfactory testimony from witnesses in the several districts, are impressed with the importance of the step they are about to take, with your Lordship's concurrence, in forwarding an address to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, by a deputation charged with the presentation of it in person.

I am desired to inform you that a deputation, consisting of Lord Francis Conyngham, M.P., the Honourable and Reverend Edward V. Bligh, General Aylmer, R.N. Fowler, Esq., Samuel Gurney, Esq., Jabez Johnson, Esq., and myself, intend leaving Marseilles for Constantinople, on the 16th of the present month, and expect to arrive at the latter city on the 23rd instant.

The Council and signatories to the address solicit the favour, in addition to the valuable services already rendered by your Lordship, sending out instructions to Her Majesty's Ambassador, to ask for an audience with His Imperial Majesty at the earliest convenient time after the arrival of the deputation; and that his Excellency will further oblige them by accompanying the deputation and introducing them on the occasion.

The Council sincerely trust that the steps they are taking, in combination with Christian brethren of different nations will, by the Divine blessing, successfully strengthen the representations already made by Her Majesty's Government on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 214.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1875.)

(No. 874.)

My Lord, *Therapia, December 24, 1874.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 264, inclosing correspondence with the Evangelical Alliance respecting the proposed address to the Sultan upon the supposed religious persecution in Turkey.

I have likewise received copies of the address from the Rev. S. Herrick, who has requested me to forward one copy to Aarifi Pasha, which I have promised to do.

The title of the address, which would have been regarded as offensive, has been removed; but the inaccuracy of the statement regarding the Ansairiyehs is retained.

However, when the deputation arrives, the Porte will have no difficulty in convincing the members that the good faith of the Alliance has been imposed upon by reports from correspondents writing with too much zeal, or with too little care, in their statement of facts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 215.

Mr. Bourke to the Rev. J. Davis.

Foreign Office, January 7, 1875.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to transmit to you, for the information of the Council of the Evangelical Society, a copy of a Memorandum which Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has received from the Chief of the Protestant community in Turkey respecting the position of converts from Mohammedanism and their treatment by the Imperial Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT BOURKE.

No. 216.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 5.)

Foreign Office, January 8, 1875.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 264 of the 11th of December, I transmit, for your Excellency's information, the accompanying copy of the address as amended and prepared for presentation to the Sultan by a deputation from the Evangelical Alliance, which I have received from the Secretary to that Society.[a]

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 217.

Mr. Bourke to the Rev. J. Davis.

Foreign Office, January 8, 1875.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant inclosing copies of the address as amended and prepared for presentation to the Sultan by a deputation from the Evangelical Alliance.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT BOURKE.

No. 218.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11, 1875.)

(No. 36. Political.)

Beyrout, December 23, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch, No. 67, which I addressed yesterday's date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting disorders in the district of Hasbeya.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

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[a] Inclosure in No. 212.

Inclosure 1 in No. 218.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir H. Elliot.

Beyrout, December 22, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch which I received by express last night from Mr. Vice-Consul Abela, reporting serious troubles in the district of Hasbeya.

The facts related by Mr. Abela were brought to my knowledge yesterday, about noon, by some natives of Hasbeya residing at Beyrout, who had received a letter from their friends who had arrived at Sidon the night before. Having heard that my Russian colleague had received a report on the subject from the Russian Vice-Consul at Sidon, I called on that gentleman and learnt from him that the report he had received confirmed what the natives of Hasbeya had told me, and that he had already addressed a telegram to His Highness the Wali, informing him of what had taken place, and urging him to take vigorous steps for putting a stop to the disorders. M. Petcovitch also informed me that he intended to send a copy of the report he had received from Sidon to the Governor-General.

I then wrote a few lines to the Wali, urging in my own part to act with vigour to repress the present troubles and to prevent them from spreading. I also telegraphed to the Jumblatt family at Mukhtara, who possess considerable influence in that part of the country, to endeavour to put a stop to the disorders and to prevent the Druzes of the the Lebanon from taking part with the Druses of Hasbeya; I have this morning received their reply, informing me that they have taken the steps I desired and that one of the brothers is ready to proceed to the spot should I find it necessary. They state that they were ignorant of what had occurred until they received my telegram.

With regard to the concluding paragraph of Mr. Abela's despatch, reporting excitement amongst the Druses of the mountain, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that last week some mulberry trees were wantonly destroyed at two different places in the Druse district; and as this is the manner in which these people show their discontent, it is natural that the inference should be drawn that the tree cutting had some relation to the events in the district of Hasbeya, which, however, I do not believe to be the case, but attribute it to the jealousy that exists between the partisans of the present and those of the ex-Kaimakam of the Shouf.

If Essad Pasha acts in the matter of Hasbeya with his usual energy and succeeds in arresting and localizing the present troubles, I have little fear that any very serious consequences will ensue, as the great danger is that the Druses of Hasbeya may be joined by those of the Hauran and the Lebanon.

Should, however, the authorities not succeed in putting down at once the present disorders, I fear they may spread to other places, and then they will become of importance, but I trust this will not be the case.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 218.

Vice-Consul Abela to Consul-General Eldridge.

M. le Consul-Général,

Saïda, le 21 Décembre, 1874.

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que ce matin on vient me rapporter qu'une révolution vient d'avoir lieu dans le Caïmacamat de Hasbeya. Voici comment cela m'a été rapporté par quelques Chrétiens réfugiés de Hasbeya qui sont arrivés ici hier vers minuit.

Ils ont dit qu'un jeune homme Chrétien du village Rachaya-el-Fokhar a demandé à se marier avec une jeune fille, et que les parents de celle-ci se sont opposés à lui accorder la main. On dit que le jeune homme a été chercher cinq brigands Druses du village Mejdil Chems, et de vive force il a arraché la fille à ses parents; il fit appeler le curé du village pour faire l'acte de mariage; le clergé s'est opposé au commencement à exécuter sa demande; mais ayant été menacé par les brigands Druses il a dû céder de crainte d'être assassiné. Les parents de la fille ont été trouver l'Evêque Grec Orthodoxe de Hasbeya et lui ont fait part du fait. Son Excellence en a donné connaissance au Caïmacam de Hasbeya, lequel a envoyé trois zaptiés et un sergent pour arrêter les brigands et le jeune homme; mais il paraît que ces derniers étaient bien résolus, puisque

à l'arrivé des zaptiés ils les ont maltraités et ont cherché à les enfermer dans une maison; ce qui porta l'un des zaptiés à tirer sur un des brigands, qu'il renversa mort; les quatre autres brigands voyant leur camarade étendu mort, se sont retirés pour appeler leurs coreligionnaires à leurs secours; deux d'entre eux se sont dirigés vers les villages de Hasbeya et les deux autres ont été du côté du village Mejdil Chems, du District Bellane, afin de prévenir les parents de l'assassiné, et en même temps pour appeler aussi au secours. Ce fait a eu lieu le jour Jeudi dernier, 17 courant; et le jour suivant, à la suite de cet appel, on a vu arriver environ 1,200 Druses pour venger la cause de leur coreligionnaire assassiné; ils ont commencé par piller le village Rachaya-el-Fukhar; puis, ils se sont dirigés vers le village El Feridis, où ils ont aussi pillé tous les Chrétiens qui s'y trouvaient, et ils se sont dirigés vers Hasbeya, ce qui obligea les Emirs Musulmans résidants à Rachaya de quitter le village et de venir se réfugier au village Taïbeh auprès du Caïmacam du Marj-Youn, Halil Bey, et à Nabatieh. Plusieurs familles Chrétiennes de Hasbeya et ses environs se sont réfugiés à Marj-Youn, Nabatieh, et une trentaine d'individus sont venus ici. On dit que le Caïmacam de Hasbeya lui-même, qu'on a menacé encore, a été à se réfugier avec plusieurs Chrétiens dans la maison de Sit Naïfé, la sœur de feu Saïd Bey Djoublat, maison qui pendant les événements de 1860 avait servi pour réfuge à quelques Chrétiens qui avaient échappés aux massacres d'alors. On a dit que le dit Caïmacam avait envoyé appeler à son secours le Chef Druse Salim Bey Chems; mais que celui-ci, vû le grand nombre des insurgés, il n'a pu rien arrêter. Ce fait a été porté à la connaissance des autorités par le Caïmacam de Hasbeya et celui de Marj-Youn et par les réfugiés, lesquels à leur arrivée ici nous ont donné, à mes collegues et à moi, connaissance de ce qui a eu lieu.

Cette nouvelle a jetté la consternation dans les cœurs des Chrétiens surtout en apprenant qu'au Mont Liban même on a remarqué une espèce d'effervescence de la part des Druses, et qu'on avait attribué au manque de contentement de l'Administration de l'Emir Moustafa. Dans la ville de Saida, si l'autorité ne surveille pas attentivement, il y aurait danger que ce bruit ne produise un mauvais effet; car il y a beaucoup de mauvais sujets qui sont assez mal disposés, surtout dans ce moment où la conscription se fait, et qui avait souvent donné lieu à des querelles.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) HABIB ABELA.

No. 219.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 11, 1875.)

(No. 37. Political.)
My Lord, *Beyrout, December* 28, 1874.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 36 of the 23rd instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting on the disorders which occurred recently in the district of Hasbeya.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 219.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir H. Elliot.

Beyrout, December 28, 1874.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 22nd instant, reporting disorders in the district of Hasbeya, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that it appears from reports which reach me that the greater portion of the Druses have returned to their homes, though some of them still continue in the neighbourhood of Hasbeya as if watching the course events may take.

His Highness Essad Pasha has sent an officer of police with five men to make an inquiry into what has occurred, but I have not yet learnt with what result.

No act of violence appears to have been committed by the Druses towards the Christians, who, however, have not forgotten the events of former years, and have naturally enough little confidence in the moderation of their Druse neighbours when the latter appear with arms in their hands.

The fugitives hesitate to return to their homes until they see the authorities taking more active steps to put down the present troubles and to punish the authors of them, though the Druses proclaim they have no quarrel whatever with the Christians, and are only anxious to obtain reparation for the death of the man who was killed by the Zaptieh in case the latter should be found to have exceeded his duty.

I have not heard that any Druses of the Lebanon have joined the insurgents whom Selim Bey Shems appears to have used all his influence to appease, in which he has been aided by the Jumblatts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

P.S.—Since writing the above, I have received Mr. Green's despatch, and have no doubt that the measures which the Governor-General proposes to take will have the effect of restoring confidence and preventing any further outbreaks.

G. J. E.

No. 220.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 11, 1875.)

(No. 38. Political.)
My Lord, *Beyrout, December* 28, 1874.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 35 of the 17th instant, reporting the departure of troops for Hodeida, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that during the last three weeks 3,000 troops and recruits, including those already reported, have been dispatched to that port, and that 1,500 more are to follow as soon as the necessary transports arrive to convey them.

We have here no accurate information of the events that have rendered it necessary to send such large reinforcements to Yemen, but it is conjectured that some serious mishap has occurred, of which no doubt your Lordship will be informed by those who are nearer to the spot.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 221.

Vice-Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received January* 11, 1875.)

(No. 28. Political.)
My Lord, *Damascus, December* 27, 1874.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch addressed by me this day to Sir Henry Elliot, reporting to his Excellency the course adopted by His Highness Essad Pasha for restoring order and confidence in the western district of Mount Hermon, the Mohammedan and Christian populations of which have been panic-stricken by the menacing attitude assumed by certain Druses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 221.

Vice-Consul Green to Sir H. Elliot.

Damascus, December 27, 1874.

Sir,

I REFRAIN from troubling your Excellency with details concerning the incidents which have led, within the last few days, to the development of a kind of panic amongst the Mohammedan and Christian populations of the villages on the western slopes of Mount Hermon, as no doubt Mr. Eldridge has placed within your Excellency's knowledge the alarming news conveyed to him through some of the refugees from the threatened district. I merely have the honour to report the view taken of the occurrences by Essad Pasha, and the assurances obtained by me from His Highness that everything will be done to restore confidence and order.

Immediately upon hearing, on the 22nd instant, from Beyrout, that certain villages had been pillaged and burnt by the Hermon Druses, I called upon Essad Pasha, who at once placed before me all the Reports, telegraphic and written, that he had received from the authorities at Hasbeya, and from the Christians who had taken refuge in Saïda. The former stated that no outrage had taken place, but that the Druzes of Mejdel Shems, a village notorious for its insubordination, had assumed a menacing attitude, as one of its inhabitants had been killed by the police at Rasheyia-el-Fokhar whilst resisting the action of the authorities. The whole of the Administrative Council, together with the Kaïmakam of Hasbeya, concluded their report by urging the Governor-General to send to their assistance half a regiment of infantry. The telegraphic despatch from the refugees at Saïda, however, although it endeavoured to depict matters in the blackest colours, clearly stated that nothing had yet happened, and that recollection of the events of 1860 were solely responsible for the exodus which had taken place.

Essad Pasha on the receipt of these accounts considered that the alarm evinced was exaggerated, and, as he did not wish the Druzes to imagine that the Government was prepared to act precipitately towards them, he only sent a captain of police with half-a-dozen troopers to Mejdel Shems to inquire into the cause of its menacing attitude.

Nothing has transpired since from the side of the Druzes to make it appear that His Highness has taken a wrong view of the occurrences, but unfortunately the accounts published in the Beyrout newspapers have greatly tended to keep up and augment the general alarm, which has now spread also to the Druzes, who fear the authorities may be pushed into adopting violent steps against them, and they are endeavouring in every way to exculpate themselves.

Essad Pasha has shown me all the reports received by him up to the present time, and from these it can be clearly gathered that the town of Hasbeya, and the villages of Rasheyia-el-Fokhar, Feridis, and Aïn Jerfa, were simultaneously driven into a panic by the appearance in their midst of excited parties of Druzes from Mejdel Shems demanding justice for the murder of their comrade.

The Governor-General having been informed by the Kaïmakam of Hasbeya that the inhabitants of the above named villages will not return to their homes unless troops are sent into the district, has now determined upon quartering a batallion in Hasbeya for the winter, and officers have already been dispatched to prepare for its reception.

Essad Pasha has told me that he will take steps to punish the authors of the disturbance, which perhaps might have assumed serious proportions but for the energy of Selim Bek Shems in using his influence over his fellow Druzes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 222.

Mr. Bourke to the Rev. J. Davis.

Foreign Office, January 11, 1875.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acquaint you that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople reports that the children of the convert Mustafa of Marsah had, with the connivence of the authorities, been enabled to join their parents at Smyrna.

His Excellency adds that not having been informed of this fact by those who had first represented the case to him, he was continuing to urge upon the Porte the hardship of maintaining the separation, without being aware that the grievance was already removed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT BOURKE.

No. 223.

The Rev. J. Davis to Lord Tenterden.—(Received January 12.)

38, Rue Lafitte, Paris, January 11, 1875.

Dear Lord Tenterden,

I AM grieved to here of your indisposition. May God in His kind providence soon restore you to perfect health and to public usefulness.

I meet some of the deputation here and we join Lord Francis Conyngham and Mr. R. N. Fowler at Marseilles on Friday, to embark on Saturday for Constantinople. Count Münster has given me a cordial and expressive introduction to the German Ambassador, and I expect to receive a similar one here from th Duc Decazes, who has already communicated to me his warm sympathy with the object of our mission. Should the suggestion approve itself to your Lordship, you would be conferring an additional favour by giving me an introduction to Sir Henry Elliot. We are strong in facts, and the Porte will do well to comply with the request that will be most respectfully urged. Should you favour me with a communication my address will be "Hôtel de Louvre, Marseilles."

The January number of "Evangelical Christendom" will be sent to you. May I call your Lordship's attention to an article on "Christians in Turkey" written by a missionary in Damascus?

Believe me, dear Lord Tenterden, with the sincerest thanks for the valuable service rendered both by yourself and Lord Derby, truly yours,

(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 224.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 13, 1875.)

(No. 378.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 31, 1874.

YOUR Lordship has already been informed that the Governor-General of Syria had put into the Christian Dragoon Regiment the two Ansairiyeh conscripts, who had deserted, and were afterwards recaptured.

In reply to an enquiry which I yesterday directed Mr. Sandison to make of the Grand Vizier, His Highness replied that he had acted upon the suggestion I had made to him, and had given orders for the third man, who had been brought up here, to be sent to the same regiment, where he will find his former comrades, and others belonging to various Christian sects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 225.

Mr. Bourke to the Rev. J. Davis.

Foreign Office, January 13, 1875.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, stating that it is the intention of the deputation of the Evangelical Alliance to leave this country for Constantinople on the 10th instant, requesting that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople may be instructed to procure an audience from the Sultan, at which the Petition of which they are the bearers may be presented to Her Majesty.

In reply, I am to inform you that Sir H. Elliot was instructed on the 30th of November last to do what he properly could to obtain an audience for the deputation, and Lord Derby has no doubt that his Excellency will do all in his power to meet the wishes of the Society. At the same time the Alliance must understand that Her Majesty's Government cannot make a formal diplomatic request to the Porte for an audience to be granted to a deputation of private persons, however much Her Majesty's Government may sympathize with the good intentions by which they may be actuated, nor can Her Majesty's Government be responsible for the statements contained in the Address which it is proposed to present to the Sultan.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT BOURKE.

No. 226.

M. de Boinville to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 14.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, January 14, 1875.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's communications of the 11th and 13th instant, addressed to the Secretary to the Evangelical Alliance.

Both of them have been forwarded to him, and will reach him at Marseilles before the departure of the deputation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. A. CHASTEL DE BOINVILLE,
Assistant Secretary.

No. 227.

Mr. Bourke to M. de Boinville.

Foreign Office, January 16, 1875.

Sir,

LORD TENTERDEN, in his letter of the 4th ultimo, informed you, by direction of the Earl of Derby, that four of the Ansairiyeh Christians had been enrolled in the Christian Dragoon Regiment in Syria, and I am now to state that Her Majesty's Ambassador reports that the man who had been brought to Constantinople has, at his Excellency's suggestion, been sent to join the same regiment, where he will find his former comrades and others belonging to various Christian sects.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT BOURKE.

No. 228.

The Rev. J. Davis to Lord Tenterden.—(Received January 18.)

Marseilles, Hôtel de Louvre, January 16, 1875.

Dear Lord Tenterden,

YOUR Lordship's letter has followed me here, for which I thank you very sincerely.

I look forward with much pleasure to making the acquaintance of Sir Henry Elliot. I hope that the object our deputation has in view will be obtained; if so, I know that no one will more rejoice than your Lordship.

We are all here, and about to embark.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 229.

M. de Boinville to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, January 18, 1875.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's communication of to-day, informing the Secretary of this Alliance that the man Dawood had been sent to join a Dragoon regiment in which are his friends and men of all religions. Your Lordship's communication has been forwarded to the Secretary, who is expected to arrive with the deputation at Constantinople on the 23rd instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. A. CHASTEL DE BOINVILLE,
Assistant Secretary.

No. 230.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 5, 5·35 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, February 5, 1875, 3·15 P.M.*

I UNDERSTAND that, in a telegram sent to London papers at the request of the Evangelical Deputation, it was stated that, as they were leaving Constantinople, an important communication from the Turkish Government was officially made to them on the subject of their mission, and the protection of Christians for the future.

No such communication was made to them, and I informed them that the Porte persisted to the last in refusing to comply with their wishes, but that the evidence afforded by their mission of the indignation caused by anything resembling religious persecution would have a beneficial effect upon the Ottoman authorities throughout the Empire.

No. 231.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 9.)

(No. 44.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 28, 1875.

THE Deputation of the Evangelical Alliance arrived here a few days ago.

I had the day before informed Safvet Pasha that they were coming, and mentioned that his predecessor had said that although the Porte could take no engagement on the subject, he did not doubt that the Sultan would consent to grant them an audience.

He replied that he did not understand how Aarifi Pasha should have held out any such expectation, as he thought it in the highest degree improbable that it could be fulfilled.

I said that I must be perfectly understood as not giving any official support to the Deputation, but as a very strong feeling existed in England on the subject of their mission, I trusted His Majesty would not refuse to receive them and to hear what they had to say.

He said that he would confer with the Grand Vizier, but did not expect his Highness to take a different view from his own upon the subject.

On Saturday the Deputation called upon me, and I told them how the matter stood, and arranged that they should call upon Safvet Pasha, accompanied by Mr. Sandison, of whose Report of the interview I have the honour to inclose a copy.

There is, I imagine, no example of the Sultan having received a Deputation, and that such an innovation should be attempted for foreigners on behalf of His Majesty's own subjects is regarded by most Turks with the utmost surprise, and if the Government refuse to advise His Majesty to grant the audience they will certainly be supported by public opinion, not only from the side of the fanatical and bigoted, but from that of the most tolerant, who are equally jealous of all foreign interference in their internal affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 231.

Mr. Sandison to Sir H. Elliot.

Pera, January 28, 1875.

Sir,

IN compliance with your Excellency's instruction of the 25th instant, I introduced to-day to Safvet Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the members of the Deputation of the Evangelical Alliance.

Mr. Davis, the Secretary, stated the object of the visit by reading out to his Excellency a summary of the religious grievances which made the Deputation feel so anxious to present in person to His Majesty the Sultan the Address of which they were the bearers, containing the signatures of some of the most influential and distinguished parties in England.

In my turn, I read to the Minister a French translation of your Excellency's instruction, of which I left him a copy, after having called his attention to the concluding paragraph, in which you express the hope that two of the principal members of the Deputation may at least be received by the Sultan.

In reply to the grievances alluded to, his Excellency stated,—

1. That His Imperial Majesty's Government, which piqued itself upon being one of the most tolerant in Europe, had shown no disposition whatever to alter its policy in regard to religious matters, and that being sincerely desirous to act more than ever in strict conformity with pledges and promises which secure perfect religious toleration to all the Sultan's subjects, it felt equally desirous of confirming and maintaining the privileges or concessions which allowed the printing and free circulation of the Bible in the country.

2. That even admitting that isolated cases of persecution had taken place in remote parts of the Empire, it was indeed often difficult, under the peculiar circumstances of the country, for the Central Government to prevent them.

3. That no persons liable to the conscription by the existing law of the Empire could, under any circumstances, enjoy exemption from military service, much less on religious grounds, and that he therefore wished it to be clearly understood that what he had just said applied in particular to the case of the Ansairiyeh conscripts.

The question of an audience of the Sultan being next mooted, his Excellency went on to say that the Sultan's Government perceiving there was no real cause for it, could not well entertain the demand of the Deputation on that score. This led to various representations on the part of the Deputation, which laid before his Excellency in a very strong light the bad effect, if not the unpleasant consequences, that a refusal for an audience would produce in England, in presence of the misapprehension which already exists there with regard to the disposition of the Imperial Government and of the Musulman population in matters of religious toleration.

As Safvet Pasha continued to hold out no encouragement for pressing the question of the audience, the Deputation went the length of telling his Excellency that since public opinion would go so strongly against Turkey in all Protestant countries, such as America, Germany, and England in particular, where public feeling and opinion had such weight with the Government, the refusal for the audience so generally desired (in England) could hardly fail to influence and affect the friendly relations which have hitherto subsisted between the Sultan's Government and that of Her Majesty the Queen.

It may, however, be gratifying to hear that Safvet Pasha, though deeply regretting an audience of this nature, as likely to establish the most undesirable precedent for the future demands of other nations in similar circumstances, ended by showing a better disposition to consider your Excellency's representations, as well as the request of the Deputation for the audience in question, which he would talk over with the Grand Vizier, and let me have an answer on the subject by Thursday next.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 232.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 9.)

(No. 45.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 28, 1875.*

WHEN the Evangelical Deputation called upon me on Saturday, they said that if the Sultan consented to receive them, they hoped that I would myself present them to His Majesty. I said that I regretted that I could not do so.

It is, in the first place, not the usual habit here for an Ambassador to make presentations in person, and I must, moreover, avoid everything that might look like an official interference on my part in matters relating to the Sultan's subjects, or that even implied that I either recognized the necessity for such an Address, or concurred in all its statements.

If, moreover, the Sultan, as was probable, were to turn to me and inquire what my own opinion was, it would be impossible for me to avoid saying that I believed the conclusions of the Alliance to have been derived from exaggerated and inaccurate reports, and that although there had certainly been one or two cases in which Christians had been treated with cruelty, there was nothing which, in my opinion, at all resembled a religious persecution.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 233.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 48.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, February 12, 1875.*

I HAVE to convey to you my approval of the assistance which you rendered to the Deputation of the Evangelical Alliance, as reported in your Excellency's despatch No. 44 of the 28th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 234.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 64.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 2, 1875.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose the copy of a letter which I wrote this morning to the deputation of the Evangelical Alliance, informing them that the Porte declined to reconsider the resolutions respecting their mission, with which I had already caused them to be acquainted.

Before the letter had been forwarded to them, the gentlemen of the deputation called upon me, and informed me that they had resolved upon not intrusting the Address to the Sultan's Ministers for delivery to His Majesty; and as they proposed leaving Constantinople in the afternoon, they asked me if I would allow it to be deposited in Her Majesty's Embassy, to which I at once assented.

Mr. Davis, the Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, in communicating to me the resolution of the deputation, not to give the address to the Sultan's Ministers for transmission to His Majesty, alluded to the expectation which had been held out to me by Aarifi Pasha, that the Sultan would not refuse to receive them; and stated, that if it had not been for their reliance upon this assurance, the deputation would not have left England.

I considered it right to observe to Mr. Davis, that although Aarifi Pasha's language had given them a reasonable expectation of being received by the Sultan, as I had only spoken to his Excellency in consequence of an intimation that the deputation was coming, he appeared to me to have gone a little too far in stating that they had done so in consequence of the Minister's language.

It rested, I said, entirely with the deputation, and not with me, to decide what they should do with the Address, of which they had been the bearers; but it was essential that they, as well as those they represented, should distinctly understand that the Porte had not refused to receive it, but had merely declined to allow it to be conveyed to His Majesty in an unusual manner.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 234.

Sir H. Elliot to the Deputation of the Evangelical Alliance.

Gentlemen, *Constantinople, February 2, 1875.*

I REGRET to have to inform you that the Porte declines to modify the resolution already communicated to you by Mr. Sandison.

The Sultan having been duly informed of your arrival, and of the object of your mission, left it to his Ministers to follow the course which they might think proper; and they do not consider it expedient to recommend His Majesty so great an innovation upon established usage as to consent that an Address to His Majesty in reference to matters belonging to the internal administration of his Empire should be personally delivered to him at an audience granted to a foreign deputation.

The Porte, in declining to accede to your request for an audience, are anxious to disclaim all intention of showing the slightest discourtesy to yourselves, or disrespect to those who signed the Address; but they have felt it incumbent upon them to avoid establishing a precedent likely to be productive of much inconvenience.

Although you have been denied the privilege of personally presenting the Address to the Sultan, you may at least have the satisfaction of feeling that the principal object of your mission will have been attained.

The evidence that has been afforded of the indignation with which anything approaching to religious persecution is regarded by the best friends of Turkey cannot fail to have a beneficial effect upon the Ottoman authorities throughout the Empire, and the Government will be desirous of preventing them from giving cause for further remonstrance.

I am, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 235.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 65.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February 3, 1875.*

AT the present moment when the case of the three Ansairiyeh converts to Christianity is attracting so much attention, the following account of the tribe to which they belong, derived from a letter from the Rev. Mr. Beattie, an American missionary, to Mr. Baker, the United States' Minister here, may be found not uninteresting.

The Ansairiyeh or Nussairiyeh chiefly inhabit the country on the seaboard extending from Tartous, or the northern termination of Mount Lebanon, to Adana in the regions of the Taurus, embracing a probable area of from 1,000 to 1,200 square miles. They have occupied these mountain-ranges from time immemorial, and are designated among historians by the repulsive name of assassins. Though their nature has been greatly modified by time and other causes, they still retain much of their ancient character for cruelty, dishonesty, and revenge. They are divided into tribes, and in many of their peculiar habits are said strikingly to resemble the Indians of Western America. They are treacherous and lazy, and passionately fond of hunting. The men buy their wives, who spend a life of servitude with their indolent husbands but little better than the bondage of slaves.

It would be difficult from any trustworthy historical data in our possession to form an accurate judgment as to the origin of these people. Judging, however, from the superstitious incongruities of their religion, one would naturally be led to conclude that it must be mixed. They are not Mohammedans, though they nominally accept the Koran in addition to their own religious books, and observe the rite of circumcision in common with Mohammedans and Jews. They are pagans, worshipping the heavenly bodies as much as ever they were adored by the ancients. They are fire-worshippers also, and do peculiar honour to this element at one of their state-feasts. Holy places or tombs of departed worthies are conspicuous on mountain-peaks or beside some sacred grove, probable relic of the old Baal worship of the country. These are their shrines of devotion, their oracles, their altars, and their gods; at them they worship, pay their vows, and take counsel, and by them they swear. Property, which elsewhere would have no security against the avarice and cupidity of the robber, will never be molested within the precincts of a holy place.

The Ansairiyeh worship the Caliph Ali, and are divided into two sects, called the Komareen and Shemseen, that is, Moonites and Sunites, because one sect worship the moon as Ali, and the other worship him in the sun. They are fatalists, and believe in the old Pythagorean doctrine of the transmigration of souls; and to crown all, this motley faith is intrenched in a bulwark of secrecy. The sect is a secret society, and its religion a secret, into the mysteries of which none are received until sworn pledges have been given of a purpose never to divulge.

A more legitimate field for missionary enterprise can hardly be imagined than that which is offered by this degraded population.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 236.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 66.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February 3, 1875.*

THE inclosed reports from Mr. Sandison will inform your Lordship of the steps taken by Her Majesty's Embassy with reference to the deputation of the Evangelical Alliance.

I had instructed him to put himself in communication with them, and to make Safvet Pasha aware how advisable it was that he should do all in his power to comply with the wishes of the representatives of public opinion, as testified by the signatures to the Address, and I several times myself spoke in the same sense to his Excellency.

Upon the question of allowing the Address to be presented to the Sultan by the deputation, Safvet Pasha never showed any sign of giving way, but upon that relating to the Ansairiyehs, his Excellency's language was at one time such as to lead to hope that they might be discharged from the Army.

This was, however, overruled on account of military considerations, which were held to render it impossible.

The statement of the Grand Vizier that the men had drawn their conscription papers three years before, took me by surprise, as I had not previously heard it advanced.

Should it prove correct, it will certainly relieve the Porte from the accusation of the of the illegal enlistment of these men.

They may, as represented by the deputation, have been entitled to their exemption from service as heads of families or for other causes, but no one is here authorized to presume upon his supposed exemption, which must be formally recognized by the proper authorities.

He is bound within a certain period to present himself before those authorities, and to state the grounds upon which he claims it, and, failing to do so, he is ever after liable to be taken, when no attention is paid to considerations which would have been valid if brought forward at the proper time, and he is regarded simply as a deserter.

The same rule prevails, I imagine, in other countries where the conscription is in force, and its strict maintenance is here considered indispensable.

Much stress has been laid on the fact that no conscription had been going on when the men were seized, but if they were in reality in the category of defaulters, as now reported by the Grand Vizier, the argument is of no force.

I have represented to Safvet Pasha, and shall continue to do so, that considering the exhibition of public sympathy provoked by the undoubtedly cruel treatment to which those men were exposed after their enlistment, the Porte should consider it as due to the credit of the Sultan's Government to give satisfactory evidence that they had been legally enrolled in the army.

With regard, therefore, to these men I can only repeat that, although the evidence of their ill-treatment at Damascus appears to me conclusive, that of the illegality of their enlistment is not equally so.

Their right to exemption on the ground originally advanced, of their having adopted the Christian faith, would certainly not be maintained, and the Deputation repeatedly told me that they did not put it forward; but I regret that, even in the address to the Sultan, it should have been thought proper to affirm that it was in consequence of their refusal to abjure Christianity that the men were enrolled.

While the unconverted Ansairiyehs are regularly taken for the army, the enrolment of the converts from that tribe cannot be stated as being resorted to on account of their adoption of Christianity.

Importance had also been attached to alleged receipts for the exemption tax paid by the conscripts; but independently of the fact that, as above stated, they should have produced these in due time before the proper authorities, the documents themselves, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy, do not appear to bear the character that had been attributed to them, for they amount to no more than an authorization to pay their "verghi" and other taxes to the district of their domicile instead of to that of their origin.

The "vergni" is an ordinary tax, and not the tax for exemption from military service.

The only other case, besides that of the Ansairiyehs, which the Deputation have brought forward as evidence of a religious persecution, is that of the convert Mustapha, of Marash, respecting which your Lordship is already in possession of my opinion, and I must say that it is most satisfactory to find that, throughout this vast Empire, with

fanatical populations, and sometimes incapable and bigoted authorities, while no complaints of persecution have been made by the native Christians, it should only have been possible to bring forward these isolated instances of the ill-treatment of converts, who, in the eyes of all Musulmans, have committed an act meriting death, and who, a very few years ago, might have suffered that penalty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

P.S.—I inclose the copy of a letter which I received from the Deputation.

H. E.

Inclosure 1 in No. 236.

Mr. Sandison to Sir H. Elliot.

Pera, January 29, 1875.

Sir,

WITH reference to my Report of the 20th instant, I have the honour to state to your Excellency the refusal of Safvet Pasha to accede to the wishes of the deputation of the Evangelical Alliance in regard to an audience of the Sultan.

Considering the spiritual character of His Majesty as Caliph and vicar of the Prophet, his Excellency did not see how it was possible for the Sultan to receive personally the complaints of a Christian deputation entrusted with a religious mission concerning converts from Mohammedanism to Christianity, without seriously offending the religious feelings and prejudices of his own subjects and co-religionists.

In compliance with previous instructions I told his Excellency that the object of the deputation was not so much to seek redress for past grievances at the hands of the Sultan as to express to His Majesty the sympathies and friendly feelings of the British nation towards Turkey, and the hope which was entertained in England to ensure for the future the faithful execution of the existing Imperial decrees granting religious freedom and toleration to all his subjects. I added that Her Majesty's Ambassador was taking no official action in the matter, inasmuch as it was not one in which Her Majesty's Government had a direct interest, and that since the case was one which had been taken up by the English public, it was for the Porte to consider how far it might be advantageous to its own interests to satisfy the wishes of a friendly nation on a similar occasion.

After repeating the objections which had been pointed out to the deputation itself the day before yesterday, namely, that such audience would establish a most undesirable precedent for the demands of other nations, particularly at a moment when the Pope was supposed to be making such strenuous exertions in the cause of the Hassounite Armenian Catholics, his Excellency said that as far as he was concerned at least, he would not even be instrumental in any way in obtaining the audience now demanded.

Towards the close of the conversation his Excellency stated, however, that the Porte saw no objection to presenting, through its own medium, to the Sultan, the address of the deputation, and of writing a formal letter to them which would convey the assurances of His Imperial Majesty on the subject of religious toleration and the observance of the existing Imperial edicts respecting such matters.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 236.

Mr. Sandison to Sir H. Elliot.

Pera, February 1, 1875.

Sir,

ACTING under your Excellency's further instructions of the 29th ultimo, I have continued strongly to urge upon the Porte the demands put forward by the deputation of the Evangelical Alliance in their letter (to your Excellency) of the 29th ultimo.

The points in question having practically been reduced to a reasonable demand deserving the favourable consideration of the Porte, namely, the liberation of the Ansairiyeh conscripts, Safvet Pasha showed every disposition to do whatever lay in his power in order to satisfy the deputation in this particular case.

As, however, the matter chiefly depended upon the Grand Vizier, his Excellency very much regretted to have to inform me this morning that there were reasons which made it utterly impossible for His Highness to concede the point, in other words, that he could not do so without altering the provisions and weakening the operation of the existing Law of Conscription, which the Turkish Government felt so anxious at all times to preserve in all its severity.

I reply, I again called Safvet Pasha's attention to what is stated in your Excellency's instructions with regard to the enlistment and subsequent treatment of the Ansairiyehs, and to the effect that the Porte's refusal to discharge them was likely to produce in England. The conscripts, I added, may have been properly enlisted and deserved punishment as deserters since there were grounds, it was said, for calling them so; but it was a matter for regret that the punishment inflicted on them at the time in Syria should, under the circumstances it was applied, have assumed all the appearance of religious persecution such as to produce an unfavourable impression in England, which it would now be difficult to remove.

His Excellency said he could hardly help not thinking so too, and that, barring the question of the audience, and of the liberation of the Ansairiyehs, he felt more than anxious to try to satisfy the deputation with one reserve only in the case of Mustafa of Marash, and by giving Her Majesty's Embassy such formal assurances in writing as would secure to Protestant converts for the future perfect toleration and protection from further molestation.

These, I remarked, were points already conceded before and after the Porte's refusal to entertain the question of the audience, and that the deputation was not likely to be satisfied with anything short of the discharge of the Ansairiyeh conscripts, whereupon his Excellency requested me to accompany him to the Grand Vizier's, which I accordingly did.

His Highness, having expressed his sincere regret at not being able to concede what he considered a most difficult point, repeated what Safvet Pasha had told me an hour before, adding, however, that the conscripts had drawn numbers during the conscription about three years ago, but they had failed to present themselves to the proper authorities within the time prescribed by law, when conscripts are, in certain cases, allowed to enjoy exemption from military service.

The Ansairiyehs in question, His Highness went on to say, had kept out of the way until the authorities thought proper to lay hold of them and treat them as deserters, which they were fully justified in doing. His Highness said, in conclusion, that he was not at all surprised at the construction which has been put by the missionaries upon the punishment inflicted on the conscripts at the time; but that this could not possibly alter the fact of their having been taken up as conscripts and deserters, and punished on that account only.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

Inclosure 3 in No. 236.

Order issued to Ismail Osman, Ahmed Gebbour, and Ahmed Gerkis, Chiefs of the District of Kardahah.

(Translation.)

ASSAAD CANAAN and Saleem and Ibrahim Khalaify, of the Protestant sect, who are of the district of Kardaha, from the village of Bhamra and Btemtoul, and residing at present in the village of Bhamra, belonging to the aforesaid district, have asked that the taxes, poll and land, apportioned to them, as they paid this year, so every year they will pay direct to the Treasury of Jebli, and be reckoned with the taxes at the villages aforementioned; and inasmuch as their demand for the conscription is (lawful), therefore, according to this agreement and their desire, you may not demand from them after the present in (reference to that), but they will pay the taxes allotted to them to the Treasury direct, without a (mediator); and for this object this has been expressly issued.

3 *Rajab*, 1285.

Kaimakam Jebbi,
(Sealed) MOHAMMED RAFFAAT.

Inclosure 4 in No. 236.

The Kaimakam of Jabelah to the Notables of the District of Kardahah.

(Translation.)

To the pride of their equals, Ismael Othena and Ahmed Jarkas and Ahmud Jabbur: the notables of the district of Kardahah.

IT has been the petition of Assad Kanaan and Abraham and Salim Khalifah, of the Protestant sect, who are of the inhabitants of the district of Kardahah, from the village of Bhamra and Tumul, now residing in the village of Bhamra within (the jurisdiction of) the said district, that the verge and capitation money apportioned over them, as they have paid it in this year, so too in each year they will make payment of it directly into the Treasury of the Khoda district, and it shall be credited to the verge of the said villages.

And since their petition has been found in conformity with the statutes, therefore, according to their covenant and their petition, ye shall have herein no claim against them after now, but they shall pay the verge due from them into the Treasury directly and without medium, and for this cause has this been written unto you particularly on the 3rd of Rajab, 1285.

(Sealed) MOHAMMED RAFAT, *Kaimakam of Jabilal.*

Inclosure 5 in No. 236.

The Deputation of the Evangelical Alliance to Sir H. Elliot.

Constantinople, January 29, 1875.

THE members of the British Deputation charged with an Address from the British and Foreign Branches of the Evangelical Alliance have waited upon your Excellency in consequence of a communication they received from Mr. Sandison yesterday, after his interview with his Highness the Grand Vizier.

The Deputation are grieved to find that, notwithstanding the statement made to your Excellency by the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, and communicated by the Earl of Derby to the Council of this Alliance, that "he had no doubt that upon application the Sultan would receive the members," and the coming of the Deputation in consequence of that assurance, they are now informed that the Porte object to obtain an audience for them.

This objection the Deputation cannot but interpret as a discourtesy to the distinguished noblemen and gentlemen who have signed the Address to His Imperial Majesty, and will be so regarded by them when informed of it on the return of the Deputation.

At the same time, the Deputation having come to Constantinople with the specific object to obtain redress for their persecuted fellow Christians and families, should this object be attained, it would ill-become them to complain of discourtesy on a question of privilege. They have been deputed to ask:—

1. That the Ansairiyeh conscripts be released from the army and restored to the useful occupations from which they were suddenly separated under circumstances of great violence and cruelty.

2. That the family of Mustapha be restored to their home at Marash.

3. That assurances be given that the benevolent intentions of the late Sultan in the Hatti-Humayoun be honourably fulfilled.

The Deputation wish the Turkish Government to be informed, that unless these points be conceded at the earnest and united request of the signatories to the Address, the Deputation will leave Constantinople painfully impressed with the fact that the representations and even request made by the British Government, through your Excellency, have not received the attention which they desire, and that the promise given by the Turkish Government in reference to the Ansairiyeh conscripts has not been fulfilled. The Deputation will not hold themselves responsible for the unfavourable impression that will be produced in Great Britain and elsewhere by the failure of the object which has brought them to Constantinople.

The Deputation desire to offer to your Excellency their cordial thanks for your Excellency's courtesy and aid during their stay in this capital.

(Signed) FRANCIS CONYNGHAM, M.P.
HENRY AYLMER, *Major-General.*
R. N. FOWLER.
SAML. GURNEY.
JABEZ JOHNSON.
JAMES DAVIS.

No. 237.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 67. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 4, 1875.

THE Deputation of the Evangelical Alliance, in leaving with me the Address to the Sultan, have, I believe, done so in the expectation or hope that your Lordship would direct me personally to present it to the Sultan.

In the assistance that I have given these gentlemen, I have gone to the very extreme limit of what could be regarded as unofficial support; but it has been a matter of no slight delicacy to refuse the more official intervention at which they were aiming without having the appearance of a want of sympathy in the cause that they were advocating.

It was hopeless to attempt to convince them that, even if every complaint on behalf of the Christians was as well founded as I believe the most of them to be exaggerated, it would still afford no justification for the official interference of Her Majesty's Embassy.

With regard to the presentation of the Address to the Sultan by me, or even its delivery to the Grand Vizier for presentation to His Majesty, it is probably unnecessary for me to state to your Lordship that such a course is in no way called for, and would be in every respect undesirable.

There was, in fact, no reason why the Address should have been left in my hands, for the Porte had never refused to receive it, and the pretension of the Deputation to dictate the manner in which it was to be delivered to the Sovereign, is one which no Government would be disposed to recognize.

My colleagues, with the exception, perhaps, of one who would have been glad to see anything which might prepare the way for intervention in behalf of the Armenian Catholics, were not only indisposed to give any support to the wish of the Deputation, but some of them, upon being spoken to by Safvet Pasha, urged very strongly upon his Excellency the inexpediency of making a precedent so likely to prove inconvenient.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 238.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 72.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 5, 1875.

I HAVE had the honour to forward to your Lordship this day, at 3·50 P.M., the following telegram *en clair*:—

"I understand that, in a telegram sent to London papers at the request of the Evangelical deputation, it was stated that, as they were leaving Constantinople, an important communication from the Turkish Government was officially made to them on the subject of their mission and the protection of Christians for the future.

"No such communication was made to them, and I informed them that the Porte persisted to the last in refusing to comply with their wishes; but that the evidence afforded by their mission of the indignation caused by anything resembling religious persecution would have a beneficial effect upon the Ottoman authorities throughout the Empire."

I last night happened to meet the Reuter's agent at the Russian Embassy, when he asked me what communication from the Porte I had conveyed to the deputation; and, upon learning the exact substance of my letter, he expressed much annoyance at having forwarded a telegram so little in accordance with the facts.

I confess that I am myself altogether at a loss to understand how the deputation can have regarded my letter, of which a copy has been forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 64, as an official communication from the Porte; for while I expressed in it my individual opinion of the good effect which might be anticipated from their mission I only stated, as regards the Porte, that they refused to modify the decisions already communicated to the deputation.

The inclosed letter from the Secretary of the Alliance appeared in the "Levant Herald" of yesterday.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 238.

Telegram communicated by the Deputation of the Evangelical Alliance to Reuter's Agent for transmission to the "Times," dated February 3, 1875.

AN important communication from the Turkish Government was officially made to the British deputation as they were leaving Constantinople on the subject of their mission and the protection of Christians for the future.

Inclosure 2 in No. 238.

Extract from the "Levant Herald" of February 4, 1875.

THE DEPUTATION OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

To the Editor of the "Levant Herald."

Sir,

A DEPUTATION appointed on behalf of the various branches of the Evangelical Alliance have, in accordance with one of their objects, viz., to promote religious liberty for all men in all countries, visited this country and been cordially welcomed by the various portions of the Christian population.

The Turkish Government have thought it consistent with their official duties and the interests of Turkey, to refuse to ask an audience of his Imperial Majesty the Sultan for this deputation to present a respectful address from some of the most distinguished persons in Great Britain and other countries on the subject of the recent persecution from which their fellow-Christians are suffering in different parts of the Empire. The deputation are persuaded that these painful occurrences are contrary to His Majesty's benevolent intentions, and, therefore, that His Majesty has only to be informed of them in order to comply with the just and reasonable request of the signatories to the address. But, as the Turkish Government have, in addition to their refusal to present the deputation to His Majesty, also refused the earnest prayer of the signatories, the deputation decline to send to his Highness the Grand Vizier the address mounted and suitably prepared for His Majesty's acceptance. They return to England to inform the British people and Christians of other countries of the exceptional reception they have met with from the official representative of this great Empire.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

Constantinople, February 2.

[We publish this letter at the special request of the highly respectable and well-intentioned body of gentlemen who formed the deputation of the Evangelical Alliance, but it must be clearly understood that we assume no responsibility for its statements or the expressions of opinion it contains.—Ed. *L.H.*]

No. 239.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 17.)

(No. 75.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 8, 1875.*

IN consequence of the mission of the deputation of the Evangelical Allinnce, I understand that the Turkish papers have been extremely violent in their denunciations of the missionaries, whom they designate, I am told, almost always as American, as the greater number no doubt are.

I have caused it to be intimated to Safvet Pasha, that although I never take notice of what is said in the papers, as the Porte professes to keep the press within suitable bounds, it would be to their own credit to see that invectives of indecent violence were not applied to a conscientious body of men.

I am happy to be able to say, that the irritation felt by the Turkish public towards the missionaries, although no doubt to a certain degree participated in by the Ministers, has not prevented the Porte from carrying into execution the promises that had been made to me in reference to certain matters in which the native Protestants had solicited my good offices.

There was no point upon which the Protestants attached greater importance than the appointment of one of their community to the Council of Education; and this has now been conceded, as had been promised to me by the nomination of the person they recommended for the post.

In sending yesterday to thank me for having helped them in this and other matters upon which they had required some help, they said that if the Porte now consents, as may be hoped, to desire that their Vekils or Representatives shall be acknowledged in the Provinces on an equal footing with those of the heads of other denominations, there will not remain a single grievance upon which they shall wish for assistance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 240.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 69.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, February 19, 1875.*

I HAVE to express the satisfaction with which Her Majesty's Government have learnt from your despatch No. 75 of the 8th instant, that notwithstanding the irritation felt by the Turkish public towards missionaries, the Porte has carried into execution the promises made to you in reference to certain matters in which the native Protestants had solicited your good offices.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 241.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 71.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, February 19, 1875.*

HER Majesty's Government concur in your views, as reported in your despatch No. 67 of the 4th instant, with regard to the address to the Sultan, which was left in your hands by the deputation of the Evangelical Society; and I have to approve the course which your Excellency has taken in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 242.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 77.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 12, 1875.

I UNDERSTAND that the Grand Vizier looks upon the omission of the deputation of the Evangelical Alliance to call upon him as a deliberate mark of disrespect.

They had been informed, on their arrival, that His Highness was ready to receive their visit, although he must decline to enter into the object of their mission, the discussion of which he had entrusted to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The omission was certainly contrary to the invariable practice here, where a visit to the Grand Vizier is considered due to his position.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 243.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 27.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand,

London, February 26, 1875.

My Lord,

I AM desired by the Council of this Alliance to send your Lordship copy of the Report of the deputation recently returned from Constantinople.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

Inclosure in No. 243.

PERSECUTIONS IN TURKEY.

Report of the British Deputation on their return from Constantinople, presented to the Members of the Council of the Evangelical Alliance, at a Special Meeting held at 7, Adam Street, Strand, Monday, the 22nd February, 1875.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

WE, your Deputation, take the earliest opportunity on our return to present you with our Report on the mission to Constantinople, with which you entrusted us, and to communicate the results so far as we can at present trace them. That mission, we were given to understand, was to convey a Memorial carefully prepared and numerously signed to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, on the subject of persecutions suffered by Christian converts in Lattakia and at Marash. We were desired, in reliance upon the assurances given by the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs to the British Ambassador and the telegram received by the Turkish Ambassador to this Court from his Government, to request the honour of being allowed to present the address to His Majesty in person. We were further instructed in our intercourse with the Turkish branch of the Alliance, to express to them and others the sympathy felt by Christians of all nations with our oppressed and suffering brethren; and our common interest in the maintenance of religious liberty throughout the Turkish Empire, secured by Imperial Decree and Treaty with the Christian Powers of Europe.

The Deputation sailed from Marseilles on Saturday, the 16th January, bearing letters of introduction from official personages in this country to the Representatives of different Courts at Constantinople, some of them of special value as expressing a lively interest in the mission, and giving instruction to render all possible aid in effecting its important object.

On the following Thursday, the 21st, we arrived at Smyrna, and found on landing several missionaries and others waiting to receive us. We were conducted to the house of the American Consul, Mr. Smithies, by whom we were very courteously received and entertained. At this meeting there were also present Mustapha and his son Ali, the banished converts from Marash, from whom we obtained the following information:—

That no permission had been given them by the Turkish authorities to leave Smyrna.

That there had been no religious ferment among the population of their native town beyond what might easily have been controlled if the authorities had been willing to do so. Mustapha was very anxious to return with his family, believing that if instructions were sent from Constantinople to protect them there would be no danger. They are now in great want, deprived of their usual means of livelihood, and entirely dependent on the charity of their Christian friends. They had received nothing from the Government, and would have starved but for the support of the missionaries. The restoration of their children through the efforts of Christian friends had been a great joy to them, especially as the children had been told that their parents were dead and would never be seen again. They were not now interfered with, but believe they are watched by the police.

A few words of sympathy and encouragement were spoken by the Deputation to Mustapha and Ali, and the meeting closed by fervent prayer, offered by the Rev. Mr. Epstein.

On Saturday morning, January 23, we landed at Constantinople, and immediately announced our arrival to the British Ambassador, requesting the favour of an interview at his Excellency's earliest convenience. This was immediately granted, and the same day we had an interview with Sir Henry Elliot at the British Embassy, when the object of our visit was explained, stress being laid on the interest awakened in Europe and America in the mission, manifested by the numerous and distinguished names attached to the Memorial.

Sir Henry Elliot stated that, as regarded the presentation of the Address to the Sultan, there would be a difficulty in obtaining an audience with His Majesty, who did not receive deputations. The minister who had officially asserted that if the Deputation came he had no doubt they would be received, was now out of office, and his successor, who had only just been appointed, did not consider himself responsible for the acts of his predecessor. Sir Henry Elliot had reminded him of the expectation that had been raised, and now expressed the opinion that possibly an audience might be granted to one or two members of the Deputation to present the Address, but not to more.

As to the particular cases mentioned in the Address, Sir Henry Elliot was of opinion that the Council of the Alliance were mistaken, and that what had taken place was not persecution. That respecting Mustapha and Ali, who had been conveyed to Smyrna, they were under no compulsion whatever to remain there, provided they did not return to Marash.

His Excellency was reminded that they were still under the same prohibition to leave Smyrna as when first brought there, and on being appealed to whether the forced removal of this family, their being beaten and put in chains, their imprisonment, and banishment to Smyrna without means of subsistence, without any alleged charge of misconduct, was not a case of persecution, his Excellency admitted that it certainly was, and could not be defended.

Referring to the Ansairiyeh Christians, Sir Henry Elliot thought that the information relied on might be inaccurate; that the Ansairiyeh were liable to conscription; and the plea raised of their being Christians could not be allowed to exempt them from military service.

The Deputation replied that neither by the missionaries nor by the Evangelical Alliance had any question been raised of the liability of Christians as well as Mohammedans to serve in the Turkish army; that the cases of oppression and cruelty rested on the abundant testimony of numerous Christian gentlemen both at Lattakia and Damascus, whose truthfulness, sincerity, and uprightness were beyond suspicion; and that their testimony had been confirmed by statements made by Representatives of Her Britannic Majesty's Government. The Porte had known the strong feeling which had been aroused among European nations on account of the occurrences, but had never denied the alleged facts. Allusion was also made to the circumstance, that one of the men who had been seized at Lattakia on suspicion of being a convert to Christianity, was liberated on his declaration before his judges that he was still one of the Ansairiyeh and not a Christian.

The British Ambassador promised at once to communicate with the Turkish Government, and to obtain an interview for the deputation with the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, advising that French and Turkish translations should be made of the Address to accompany the presentation of it, which was accordingly obtained.

The same afternoon we were favoured with a visit from the Committee of the Constantinople Branch of the Alliance, who gave us their cordial welcome, and assured us of the deep satisfaction which our visit gave to all classes of the Christian population. We were informed that, notwithstanding the Imperial decree, much intolerance and suffering on account of religious opinions prevailed. Your deputation consulted with

the Committee on the steps desirable to be taken with a view to promote the objects of their mission.

On Monday morning numerous members of the Protestant community, introduced by Hagop Matteosian, the Vékil or civil head of that body, presented the following address:—

"To the Members of the Deputation of the Evangelical Alliance.

"Gentlemen,

"We the Undersigned, in behalf of the Protestant Community of this Empire, most respectfully welcome you to our country as the distinguished representatives of Evangelical Christendom.

"We fully appreciate your purely benevolent motives in coming so far in such an uninviting season of the year. And in grateful acknowledgment of your disinterested sympathy ever manifested for the religious welfare of all Evangelical Christians, and specially of our own, we offer you our heartiest thanks.

"We have heard of your noble and generous design of pleading with our August Sovereign for the enlargement of religious liberty in this country, and we sincerely hope and believe that you will find our Gracious Sovereign ready to respond to your best wishes, and no less so His Majesty's present enlightened Ministry.

"We beg to assure you, gentlemen, of our highest and lasting esteem, as well as of all who seek to promote the best interests of this country.

We are, &c.

(Signed) "Hagop Matteosian, *Vékil of the Protestant Community.*
"M. D. Kiredjian.
"V. A. Constantian.
"Hohn. Manassian.
"Stepan Utudjian.
"H. H. Djemjian.
"G. T. Kapriélian.
"N. G. Dadirrian, M.D.
"Bishop Mighirditch, *Episcopalian.*
"G. Vartanian, M.D.
"Hohannes Do-Mugherditchian.

"*Constantinople, January* 24, 1875."

The address was acknowledged by the chairman of the deputation, and an interesting conversation ensued on the general question of religious liberty. Several important facts were stated, painfully showing the insufficient protection afforded to different classes of Christian subjects of Turkey, and the failure of efforts to redress the wrongs complained of. Various documents were also presented, which we promised should be submitted to the Council of the Alliance, and the Vékil was assured that they would receive careful consideration.

Members of other religious bodies also had interviews with us, among them Monsignor Etienne Agasian, Head of the Armenian Roman Catholic Church, who complained of the persecutions and annoyances suffered at the hands of the Turkish authorities at Erzeroom and Angora.

Your deputation paid visits to the American, French, German, Austrian, and other Embassies, and they desire to record their sense of the courteous attentions and kind hospitality which they received. They desire also to acknowledge the valuable advice and information given to them, accompanying assurances of sympathy and cordial approval of the object of their visit.

On Tuesday, January 26th, accompanied by Mr. Sandison, first dragoman to the British Embassy, we had an interview at the Sublime Porte, with Safvet Pasha, Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Sandison having introduced us, then read in French the instructions received from Sir Henry Elliot, to the effect that the deputation had come upon a most important mission, that serious feelings of indignation had been aroused in England and other countries by what had recently taken place in the Turkish Empire, and that it was desirable in the interests of Turkey that the deputation, or at least some members of it, should have an opportunity of presenting to His Imperial Majesty in person the document which bore the signatures of eminent personages well known in connection with the affairs of Turkey.

This was followed by an address in French from one of the deputation, who, having

stated the grievances complained of, expressed on behalf of the distinguished signatories the earnest desire to bring the circumstances before the attention of His Imperial Majesty, as we were assured that the grievances complained of were contrary to the just policy of His Majesty, and needed only to be brought to His Majesty's knowledge in order to receive instant and satisfactory redress.

His Excellency replied, "That for His Majesty to receive a foreign deputation was without precedent, and, if accorded, might be followed by consequences which we should be the first to regret; that religious liberty was guaranteed throughout Turkey; that the Turkish army must be maintained, and no exemptions on religious grounds could be admitted. With all respect to the deputation, only two cases had been mentioned in the Memorial, and these were not sufficient in the judgment of the Turkish Government to cause them to depart from established usage in this matter, as they were small matters about which to trouble His Majesty.

A discussion followed, in which it was explained to His Excellency why only two cases, among others, were referred to—these having been specially authenticated to the Council and the British Government, and being sufficient for the purpose of bringing the subject to the notice of His Imperial Majesty. It was also made known to his Excellency that if the deputation were not allowed to present the Address to His Majesty, or if they returned without receiving any official promise from the Turkish Government, that our brethren whose cause we came to plead would be restored to their liberty and just rights, the very unfavourable impressions already produced in England would be seriously intensified. His Excellency then promised us that he would state our views to the Grand Vizier, and learn his Highness's decision on the subject, adding, that England had always been a great friend of Turkey.

We were subsequently assured that a favourable impression had been produced, and that his Excellency was desirous of meeting our wishes. We were also informed that communications were passing between the British Embassy and the Porte; that strong representations had been made on the subject of meeting the wishes expressed by the signatories to the Address, and the hope was encouraged that we should not be allowed to return without seeing our object, at least in part, accomplished. On Thursday evening we received a visit from Mr. Sandison, who reported the decision of the Grand Vizier to the following effect:—"That His Majesty the Sultan, being Caliph or religious Head of the Mahommedan religion, could not receive a foreign deputation coming to him on religious grounds, without seriously offending his Mussulman population; and that, as regards the cases of alleged persecution, the Turkish Government would give orders that Mustapha and his family should be allowed to leave Smyrna for any other place they pleased, but not to return to Marash for the present. As regards the Ansairiyeh conscripts, no promise of any alteration in their condition could be given."

Your Deputation were surprised at such a result, after the strong representations made by the British and other Embassies to the Sultan's Government; and feeling that the honour of England—foremost in advancing the great cause of religious liberty—was deeply concerned, resolved to present the following Address to Her Majesty's Ambassador, which was done on the ensuing morning, Friday, January 29th:—

"To the Right Honourable Sir Henry Elliot, G.C.B., Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

"*January* 29, 1875.

"The Members of the British Deputation, charged with an Address from the British and Foreign Branches of the Evangelical Alliance, have waited upon your Excellency in consequence of a communication they received from Mr. Sandison yesterday, after his interview with his Highness the Grand Vizier.

"The Deputation are grieved to find that, notwithstanding the statement made to your Excellency by the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, and communicated by the Earl of Derby to the Council of this Alliance, 'that he had no doubt that upon application the Sultan would receive the Members, and the coming of the Deputation in consequence of that assurance, they are now informed that the Porte objects to obtain an audience for them.

"This objection the Deputation cannot but interpret as a discourtesy to the distinguished noblemen and gentlemen who have signed the Address to His Imperial Majesty, and will be so regarded by them when informed of it on the return of the Deputation.

"At the same time the Deputation have come to Constantinople with the specific object to obtain redress for their persecuted fellow Christians and families; should this

object be attained, it would ill-become them to complain of discourtesy on a question of privilege. They have been deputed to ask:—

"1. That the Ansairiyeh conscripts be released from the army and restored to the useful occupations from which they were suddenly separated under circumstances of great violence and cruelty.

"2. That the family of Mustapha be restored to their home at Marash.

"3. That assurances be given that the benevolent intentions of the late Sultan in the Hatti-Humayoun be honourably fulfilled.

"The Deputation wish the Turkish Government to be informed, that unless these points be conceded at the earnest and united request of the signatories to the Address, the Deputation will leave Constantinople painfully impressed with the fact that the representations and even request made by the British Government through your Excellency have not received the attention which they deserve, and that the promise given by the Turkish Government in reference to the Ansairiyeh conscripts has not been fulfilled. The Deputation will not hold themselves responsible for the unfavourable impression that will be produced in Great Britain and elsewhere by the failure of the object which has brought them to Constantinople.

"The Deputation desire to offer to your Excellency their thanks for your Excellency's courtesy and aid during their stay in this Capital.

"Francis N. Conyngham, M.P.
"Henry Aylmer, *Major-General.*
"R. N. Fowler.
"Samuel Gurney.
"Jabez Johnson.
"James Davis."

In our interview with Sir Henry Elliot the following day, an important fact was mentioned. His Excellency was reminded that he had received instructions from the Earl of Derby "to endeavour to procure orders for the immediate release of the Ansairiyeh conscripts, if such orders had not already been given." That request, made by Great Britain, had not been complied with. The promise, however, for the release and return to their occupation of the three converts violently seized at Lattákin was given by the Turkish Government to the American Minister, on condition that he obtained the necessary papers proving exemption from military service. The papers were obtained, duly certified, and declared sufficient by the Turkish Minister, but the men did not obtain their release; and three more Christian converts of the Ansairiyeh tribe were subsequently seized under circumstances of like severity with the former, and taken military prisoners to Damascus, where they still remain.

The expectation was still encouraged that a modification of the Grand Vizier's decision might be obtained, but Mr. Sandison subsequently communicated to us the ultimatum of the Porte, which in no way reversed the decision previously arrived at. At the same time an offer was made on the part of the Vizier to receive the Address, and convey it to the Sultan.

After much deliberation and careful consultation, both with the Local Committee and with influential persons in Constantinople, well competent from their long residence and intimate acquaintance with Turkish affairs to give suitable advice, we arrived at the conclusion that the offer on the part of the Grand Vizier to receive the Address, and convey it to His Imperial Majesty, could not be accepted. We considered that, with due respect to those whom we had the honour to represent, and in fulfilment of the trust reposed in us, there was only one course left for us to take, viz., to leave Constantinople at once; but, before doing so, to deposit the Address, suitably mounted and engrossed, for presentation to His Majesty, with the British Ambassador, and to request Sir Henry Elliot to forward to His Highness the Grand Vizier the following protest:—

"His Highness Hussein-Avni Pasha, "*Constantinople, February* 3.

"The British deputation charged with the presentation of an Address to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan on the subject of the cruel treatment inflicted on some of His Majesty's Christian subjects on account of their religious opinions, are much disappointed at the refusal of your Highness to solicit for them an audience of His Majesty, especially after the expectation held out by the Turkish Government, and communicated officially to Her Britannic Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Right Honourable the Earl of Derby.

"The deputation venture, in all fidelity to those whom they represent, to protest against this refusal as disrespectful to the distinguished noblemen and gentlemen (some

of whose names are closely connected with the history of Turkey) who have signed the Address. The deputation also deeply deplore that your Highness should not only decline the request for an audience, but also refuse to liberate the Ansairiyeh conscripts from the military service to which they had been subjected under circumstances of great cruelty, and in violation of the law of Turkey, and to permit the family of Mustapha to return to their home and occupation at Marash.

"The deputation on leaving Constantinople beg respectfully to represent to your Highness that they cannot hold themselves responsible for the alienation of that good feeling towards Turkey which had hitherto existed in England, nor for the disappointment which the failure of their mission will produce both in Europe and in America.

(Signed) "Francis N. Conyngham, M.P.
"Henry T. Aylmer, *Major-General.*
"R. N. Fowler.
"Samuel Gurney.
"Jabez Johnson.
"James Davis."

Sir Henry Elliot kindly promised to forward the protest to His Highness, and also permitted us to leave with him the Address to the Sultan. His Excellency, at the same time, informed us that he had just learned that the Turkish Government now justified their treatment of the Ansairiyeh conscripts, on the ground that three years since the men should have presented themselves for enrolment; that not having done so, they were considered as deserters, and consequently were so treated. This plea, now urged for the first time after fifteen months' agitation of the question, was pronounced to be "suspicious," and his Excellency said that he had requested of the Turkish Government to order an investigation into the matter, requiring that it should be public, and conducted in a fair and satisfactory manner.

Before leaving Constantinople, we communicated this circumstance to the Committee of the Turkish Branch of the Alliance, who will, without delay, obtain the necessary evidence to show that these Christian men were legally exempt from conscription, and, therefore, were under no obligation to present themselves to the authorities for enrolment. Their peaceful and useful lives in the same district, year by year, as teachers in the Christian mission schools, proves that they had no consciousness of any charge hanging over them as deserters.

On the morning of their departure, within an hour of embarkment, your deputation had placed in their hands the following letter from Her Majesty's Ambassador:—

"Gentlemen, "*Constantinople, February* 2, 1875.

"I regret to have to inform you that the Porte declines to modify the resolution already communicated to you by Mr. Sandison.

"The Sultan, having been duly informed of your arrival and of the object of your mission, left it to his Ministers to follow the course which they might think proper, and they do not consider it expedient to recommend to His Majesty so great an innovation upon established usage as to consent that an Address to His Majesty, in reference to matters belonging to an internal administration of his Empire, should be personally delivered to him in an audience granted to a foreign deputation.

"The Porte, in declining to accede to your request for an audience, are anxious to disclaim all intention of showing the slightest discourtesy to yourselves, or disrespect to those who signed the Address, but they have felt it encumbent upon them to avoid establishing a precedent likely to be productive of much inconvenience.

"Although you have been denied the privilege of personally presenting the Address to the Sultan, you may at least have the satisfaction of feeling that the principal object of your mission will have been attained.

"The evidence that has been afforded of the indignation with which everything approaching to religious persecution is regarded by the best friends of Turkey, cannot fail to have a beneficial effect upon the Ottoman authorities throughout the Empire, and the Government will be desirous of preventing them from giving cause for further remonstrance.

"I have, &c.
(Signed) "Henry Elliot.

"To the Deputation of the Evangelical Alliance."

On Monday, Feburary 1st, we had the privilege of entertaining at breakfast the members of the Committee of the Turkish Branch of the Evangelical Alliance, and afterwards holding a final conference with them as to the wisest and most beneficial course to pursue under the present circumstances. We desired to present the cordial salutations of the Committee to the Council and members of the British Organization of the Evangelical Alliance, with their warmest thanks for the visit of the deputation. The hope was fervently expressed that the Christianity of Great Britian would be still further moved by the occurrences in Turkey, and influence public opinion so that its voice might be heard and felt in the Cabinet of that Empire.

We desire to remind our Christian brethren of the pledge given by Sultan Abdul-Medjid, that "no subject of the Empire shall be hindered in the exercise of the religion that he professes, nor shall be in any way molested on that account;" and that upon this pledge Turkey was regarded as having adopted the sentiments of the most civilized nations, and has largely profited by her alliance with Christian Powers of Europe. This pledge, as we are informed, has been repeated on several occasions by the reigning Sultan, and to this day the Turkish Government declares its policy to be one of perfect religious liberty. Judging from the reception our respectful representations have met with, and the information obtained during our stay in Constantinople, we are constrained to record the deliberate conviction that this policy is not carried out; that the treatment of Christian converts on the part of local authorities is often insulting, and, at times, in the highest degree cruel; and that there is a failure on the part of the officers of the Porte to rebuke their subordinates when convicted of intolerance, and an abuse of the powers intrusted to them. We need scarcely add, that our visit deeply impressed us with the high importance to the interests of civil and religious liberty throughout the world; that it should be energetically sustained by the British Government at home, and its Representatives abroad.

Although the immediate object of the mission may not appear at present to have been gained, your deputation are gratified to know that it has not been in vain. They were assured by many persons in various quarters, that very important results had already been secured. The expression of wide-spread sympathy with those who are suffering for conscience sake, has carried with it much consolation and encouragement. Their personal intercourse with Christian men, holding and promulgating the doctrines of the Gospel in Turkey, has strengthened them in their work and testimony. Much valuable information has been obtained concerning the true state of religious liberty in Turkey, which will be available in any further united action it may be thought desirable to take. A powerful impression has been produced as to the real union of Christians of various nations, and their active co-operation whenever and wherever called for by the sufferings and oppressions of their brethren; and, lastly, in the words of Sir Henry Elliot, "The evidence afforded by the indignation with which everything approaching to religious persecution is regarded by the best friends of Turkey cannot fail to have a beneficial effect upon the Ottoman authorities throughout the Empire."

Your deputation resign the trust committed to them, in the confidence and hope that the Council of the Evangelical Alliance will not rest in their exertions until the grievances of their Christian brethren are redressed, and religious liberty becomes an accomplished fact in the Turkish Dominions.

We remain, my Lords and Gentlemen, your faithful Servants,

(Signed) FRANCIS N. CONYNGHAM, M.P., *Chairman.*
HENRY AYLMER, *Major-General.*
R. N. FOWLER.
SAMUEL GURNEY.
JABEZ JOHNSON.
JAMES DAVIS.

The Report having been received, the following Resolution—

Moved by John Finch, Esq., Treasurer,
Seconded by Sir Harry Verney, Bart.,

"That the best thanks of this Council be presented to Lord Francis N. Conyngham, M.P., and the members of the deputation, for their valuable services in connection with their important mission to Constantinople, and for the wisdom and firmness displayed by them under peculiar and trying circumstances"—

was unanimously passed.

No. 244.

Mr. Bourke to the Rev. J. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March 1, 1875.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th ultimo, inclosing copy of the Report of the British Deputation recently returned from Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT BOURKE.

No. 245.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 3.)

(No. 20. Consular.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 20, 1875.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of the answer I have returned to Mr. Vice-Consul Kirby Green's despatch No. 4, of which he sent a copy to your Lordship, respecting a letter published in a Turkish newspaper, reflecting upon the Protestant missionaries.

If the latter publish accounts of their success among the Mussulman populations, retorts not always temperate or truthful must be expected, but had better remain unnoticed, unless in very extreme cases.

The Vekil of the Protestants called upon me three days ago, again to express his grateful thanks for the consideration with which he is now treated by the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 245.

Sir H. Elliot to Vice-Consul Green.

Sir, *Constantinople, March 20, 1875.*

I HAVE received your despatch of the 11th instant, inclosing the translation of an article from the newspaper "Surizeh," in explanation of a letter published in a preceding number, which had appeared offensive to the Protestants, and inquiring whether I considered it sufficient.

I have to state, in reply, that you acted properly in abstaining from entering into a discussion with the Governor-General upon this subject, and to add, that it will not be necessary or desirable to revive it, by calling for any further explanation.

I am not acquainted with the article in the "Church Missionary Gleaner," which is represented as having provoked the original letter; but it is to be remembered that any parade of conversions from Mahomedanism to Protestantism, or of the attendance of Mahomedans at Christian Churches, is likely to call forth intemperate comments.

The letter is, I believe, correct in representing that among the different Christian denominations, it is the Protestant missionaries alone who endeavour to make converts among the Mussulmans; and this is to a great extent the cause of that community being regarded with more disfavour than the others.

The Imperial Government is at present so far from being indisposed towards the native Protestants, that twice within the last few weeks, their Vekiel has come to me to express his satisfaction at finding his community treated with a consideration which it had never before experienced.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 246.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 111.)

Foreign Office, April 6, 1875.

Sir,

A DEPUTATION of the Evangelical Alliance called at this Office to-day, and left with me the inclosed printed papers.

I assured them that Her Majesty's Government sympathized with the object which the Alliance had in view of securing the freedom of religious worship in the Ottoman Dominions and elsewhere, and, after listening to their representations on the subject of the Ansairiyeh Christians and the convert at Marash, and also to an allegation which was brought forward that the Porte had refused permission to print a Turkish translation of the Bible. I promised that I would call upon your Excellency to report how these matters now stand.

I have accordingly to request that your Excellency will be good enough to provide me with a general report upon the present position of the various matters to which the Alliance have called attention, and with your opinion whether the interference of Her Majesty's Government is called for, or could properly be exercised in regard to any of them.

I have already informed you in my despatch No. 71 of the 19th of February, that Her Majesty's Government approved the course which your Excellency proposed to adopt in regard to the Address left with you by the deputation which visited Constantinople, as reported in your Excellency's despatch No. 67 of the 4th of February, and I have no fresh instructions to give your Excellency on that point.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 247.

The Rev. C. Jackson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received April* 8.)

British and Foreign Bible Society, Queen Victoria Street, Blackfriars, London, April 6, 1875.

My Lord,

YOUR Lordship's time and attention must be so fully occupied with other matters than those which were brought before you by the deputation on the question of religious liberty in Turkey, whom you were kind enough to receive to-day, that I take the liberty of placing in a more permanent form, for the information of your Lordship, the facts which I then brought under your notice.

Some of them will be found in detail in "the correspondence respecting Protestant Missionaries and Converts in Turkey," presented to Parliament in 1865. At page 6 of that document is printed the Memorial which the Bible Society presented to Earl Russell, in consequence of the closing of its depôt in Constantinople by the Turkish Police, who expelled our officials, and set a seal upon the doors, and also in consequence of one of our colporteurs having been arrested and imprisoned in Bulgaria. At page 23 occurs the letter of Earl Russell to Sir H. Bulwer, in which he instructs him to "urge the Turkish Government to allow the free distribution of the Bible by means of hawkers employed by the Bible Society or other British subjects as an essential and indispensable part of religious liberty guaranteed by the Hatti-Humayoun, and confirmed by the practice of many years."

At page 30, Sir H. Bulwer, in replying to the above letter, admits that "the Bible Society has always conducted itself quietly and respectably, that the Porte regards it with favour rather than otherwise, that it has given permission to print the Scriptures in the Turkish language, and that there is no intention on the part of the police of interfering with the colporteurs if they conduct themselves quietly."

At page 36 occurs the despatch of Aali Pasha, in which he declares, "everyone is now free to profess his own religion, and to follow his own form of worship. The members of religious communities are not subjected to any restraint in the exercise of their religious ceremonies. All creeds erect their places of worship, and enjoy full liberty, and the sacred books of all religions are printed and published in different parts of the Empire." The despatch closes with these remarkable words: "I make it my duty to add that the free sale and circulation of the Bible continues, and will always continue to be authorized in the Empire." On the faith that these promises will be fulfilled, and these principles maintained, Earl Russell closes the correspondence.

On the same faith the British and Foreign Bible Society has, in conjunction with the American Bible Society, been engaged for many years, and at a cost of 7,000*l.*, in bringing out a new translation of the Bible, in Turkish, and now that this important work is ready for the press, the Turkish Government refuse permission to print it. The Representatives of the English and American Governments have remonstrated and have obtained an acknowledgment of error on the part of the Turkish authorities in attempting to prohibit the printing, but when an application is made for an authorization to print, an evasive answer is given, and the matter rests where it was.

It would be superfluous to call your Lordship's attention to the fact that permission to profess the Christian faith and to exercise its rights and ceremonies is but a mockery if the only book on which that faith and practice are founded is suppressed, and that religious liberty is an empty name if access is forbidden to the Revelation of Him who alone can give liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.

The Committee of the Bible Society earnestly entreat your Lordship's powerful aid to relieve them from the difficulty in which suddenly and unexpectedly they find themselves placed, and they venture to hope that you will require, as a matter of right, secured by Treaty and confirmed by the practice of many years, that a written authorization be given to their representatives at Constantinople to print the Bible in the Turkish language.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES JACKSON, *Secretary.*

No. 248.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. C. Jackson.

Foreign Office, April 9, 1875.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, respecting the refusal of the Porte to give permission for a Turkish translation of the Bible to be printed; and I am to inform you that a copy of your letter has been forwarded to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople with instructions to report on the matter.

I am, &c.

(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 249.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 112.)

Foreign Office, April 9, 1875.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 111 of the 6th instant, I transmit to you herewith an extract from the "Times," containing a substantially accurate report of the proceedings at my interview with the deputation of the Evangelical Alliance.

I also inclose, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a letter from the British and Foreign Bible Society respecting the alleged refusal of the Porte to permit the printing of a Turkish translation of the Bible.*

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Inclosure in No. 249.

Extract from the "Times" of April 7, 1875.

THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE AND THE PORTE.—A deputation from the Evangelical Alliance and other bodies on the subject of religious persecution in Turkey was received yesterday by the Earl of Derby at the Foreign Office. The deputation, which was introduced by Lord Lawrence, consisted of the following gentlemen:—Lord Francis Conyngham, M.P.; Sir Henry Havelock, M.P.; Mr. A. M'Arthur, M.P.; Major Peploe, M.P.; Colonel the Hon. Strange Jocelyn; Mr. James P. Corry; Mr. George Anderson, M.P.; Mr. John Finch; General Burrows; Mr. Bedford Marsh; Mr. W.

* No. 247.

Ward; Lieutenant-Colonel R. Wilmot Brooks; Mr. R. N. Fowler; Mr. Samuel Gurney; Mr. J. Lambert Jones; Mr. Robert Johnston; Mr. Thomas Seecombe; Rev. Charles M. Birrell; Rev. Robert Johnston; Mr. Lockhart Gordon, Secretary of the Christian Vernacular Education Society; Rev. Charles Jackson, Mr. Henry F. Bowker, and Mr. Joseph Hoare, representing the British and Foreign Bible Society; Captain the Hon. F. Maude and General A. Clarke, representing the Church Missionary Society; the Rev. James Davis, and the Rev. C. de Boinville.

Lord Lawrence said that letters had been received from the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earl of Chichester, the Earl of Harrowby, Lord Ebury, and several members of Parliament, expressing regret at being unavoidably absent, and their deep interest in the object of this interview. In the absence of the Archbishop, it had devolved upon him to express the feelings of the several societies represented by the deputation. A meeting was recently held at Lord Ebury's, when a resolution was passed (moved by the Archbishop of Canterbury, seconded by himself, Lord Lawrence) regretting that the Grand Vizier of Turkey had refused to apply to the Sultan for an audience for the deputation which recently visited Constantinople. The meeting also resolved to request the Earl of Derby to instruct the British Ambassador at Constantinople to present the Memorial to the Sultan which the deputation had left with his Excellency, or to adopt such other methods as might be thought likely to accomplish the desired object. The Memorial contained nothing that could give the slightest offence. It embodied the sentiments promulgated by the late Sultan in 1856, and quoted the words of His Majesty's firman, "Henceforward neither shall Christians be insulted in my dominions, nor shall Christians be in any way persecuted for their religion." The particular cases intended to be brought before the Sultan were two, in which the liberality of sentiment expressed in the firman had been entirely departed from. In one case two Christians of Marash had been taken from their homes, beaten, imprisoned, and banished to Smyrna in consequence of their religion. The other case was that of the Ansairiyeh converts taken to Lattakia and cruelly used because of their refusal to abjure the Christian religion. Considering how much Turkey owed to England, Christians in this country considered it their duty to press upon the Turkish Government that Christianity should have fair play. The deputation trusted that his Lordship would take into consideration what was urged in the Memorial and in the resolution passed at Lord Ebury's, and that especially he would use his great influence with the Representative of England in Turkey to further the objects which the promoters of the Memorial had at heart.

The Earl of Derby said he apprehended that we had no right to insist on the Sultan receiving a deputation. He believed that, as a matter of fact, the Sultan never received deputations of his own subjects. He lived a very secluded life, seldom transacting business with any but his own Ministers, and even they did not always succeed in obtaining audiences. The refusal of an audience by such a Sovereign must not be regarded in the same light as a refusal by any other European Government. He (Lord Derby) regretted very much that any misapprehension should have occurred. Undoubtedly some hopes were held out, but no actual promise of an audience was given by the Turkish authorities. The deputation could not doubt his sympathy with their objects. Freedom of thought, of speech, and of action, as far as that was compatible with the requirements of civilized society, were the very bases of English society, and we were naturally anxious that those principles should be extended as far as our influence could extend them. At the same time, it must be recognized that in a vast Empire, not having an effective system of police, not having a strong central authority in which religious (by which he meant Mahomedan) and national sentiment were blended, as it were, in one, and in which very strong, even fanatical feelings prevailed among the mass of the population, there were very great difficulties to be encountered, and which it was not fair to the Porte and its advisers that we should not bear in mind. With regard to the Ansairiyeh, Lord Lawrence did not refer to the fact that they were not originally a Christian tribe, and, therefore, their position was essentially distinct from that of an hereditary Christian population. The Turks might thus say, with some truth, "If we were to allow any Ansairiyeh to escape the consequences of the conscription who declares himself a Christian, we shall have wholesale conversions." The admission by the Turks of exemption on the ground of conversion to Christianity would be in short the holding out of a hope to any one that he might escape military service by abandoning his religion. We must, therefore, admit that if the Ansairiyeh were liable to conscription in the state in which they were born, and the Turks contended that they were, then the circumstances of their having embraced Christianity did not exempt them from the operation of the military law. The question

was whether they had not been persecuted and ill-treated, not in order to compel them to serve, but as a punishment for their change of faith. That might be, and he believed was, to a certain extent, true as regarded local authorities. But there was an interference on their behalf, and they were removed from the regiment in which they had been serving and placed in another in which Christians were actually serving; and it was stated that they would be free to follow their religious convictions. Although, perhaps naturally and excusably, yet unfortunately, some of these men deserted, and that gave the authorities an advantage over them, for they would be sought as persons who had committed a breach of the law. What was the actual position of these men at present?

The Rev. James Davis said that the strength of the Deputation's case was that the men who had been seized had been teachers in the mission schools for fifteen or seventeen years, and had never been enlisted in the army up to the time of their forcible arrest.

Lord Derby.—There is considerable conflict of evidence on that point.

Mr. Davis.—We have not heard of any, nor have the statements of the missionaries and others on the spot been denied. The men taken in the autumn of 1873 were not taken as deserters or soldiers at all, nor did they hear anything about conscription until they had resisted threats and promises and much cruel treatment to make them give up their religion. Two of them finding their sufferings to be intolerable, escaped from Damascus, encouraged to do so, as the American Minister informed us, by their own officers. They returned to their own village and to the school whence they were afterwards seized with three others, and brought as military prisoners to Damascus. They are now, we hear, in a dragoon regiment at Beyrout, where the one who had been taken to Constantinople has been sent to join them.

Mr. R. N. Fowler said the fact that they had been teachers for sixteen years showed they had arrived at an age when no Government would be anxious to enlist them except under the pressure of war.

Lord Derby.—Had they been converts sixteen years?

Mr. Fowler.—Yes. Another man who declared that he was still an Ansairiyeh was released.

Sir Henry Havelock pointed out that the men originally taken were exempt from conscription, for one reason among others, that they had paid the exemption tax.

Lord Lawrence read an extract from the "Levant Herald," which referred to the sufferings of a large number of persons in another part of Turkey, where fathers and husbands had been removed on account of their religion.

Lord Derby.—That statement is entirely new to me.

Lord Francis Conyngham thanked Lord Derby for the assistance he had rendered to the Deputation to Constantinople, and regretted that the representations his Lordship had made had not been so effectual in Constantinople as had been anticipated. He reminded Lord Derby that Sir Moses Montefiore and the Papal Nuncio had received audiences of the Sultan. It was also the custom of His Majesty to receive a petition or memorial from the poorest of his subjects, who presented it to him at the door of the mosque where he worshipped. For obvious reasons the Deputation would not adopt that course.

The Rev. Charles Jackson, secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, read extracts from a correspondence which was presented to Parliament in 1865 between Ali Pasha, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Earl Russell, in which Ali Pasha wrote "Every one is now free to profess his own religion and to follow his own form of worship," and "I think it my duty to add that the free sale and circulation of the Bible continues, and will always continue, to be authorised in the Empire." Now, however, a reactionary policy had been commenced by the Turkish Government against Christianity. Since 1861 the Bible Society had, with the knowledge of the Turkish Government, expended 7,000*l.* upon the preparation of a translation of the Bible into the Turkish language. The translation was now complete, and application to the Turkish Government for permission to print had been made, but to the present time no official consent had been given.

Sir Henry Havelock said perhaps the disappointment of the Deputation in Constantinople would prove fortunate after all since the circumstances had now happily fallen into Lord Derby's hands to be dealt with in strict official form.

The Hon. Francis Maude, on behalf of the Church Missionary Society, expressed his full concurrence with the remarks that had been made by the members of the Deputation.

Lord Lawrence having thanked Lord Derby for the interview, the Deputation then retired.

No. 250.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 114.)

Foreign Office, April 10, 1875.

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 29, Consular, of the 20th of March, forwarding copy of your reply to Vice-Consul Green's despatch No. 4, which related to a letter published in a Turkish newspaper, reflecting upon the Protestant missionaries, I have to inform you that I have received a copy of the aforesaid despatch, and that I have approved of Mr. Vice-Consul Green's conduct as reported therein.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 251.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 11.)

(No. 163.)

Constantinople, March 29, 1875.

My Lord,

IN the report of the Deputation of the Evangelical Alliance, of which a copy was sent to me by their Secretary, it is stated that when they stopped at Smyrna, they found that the convert Mustapha of Marash was kept there under police observation, and not allowed to leave the place.

This statement is perfectly correct, and I found upon inquiry that the orders which had been promised to me in reference to this man had not been forwarded to the Governor-General of Smyrna.

Safvet Pasha, however, engaged that it should be done without further loss of time, and, in reply to a question which I put to him to-day, he assured me that the order was sent some time ago, and that the man is now perfectly free to go where he pleases, except to Marash, without molestation from anyone.

With regard to the Ansairiyeh conscripts, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have caused the Turkish Law of Conscription to be carefully examined, with a view to ascertain whether the Porte was justified in maintaining that they had been properly regarded as deserters.

The result has been to leave no doubt that by the provisions of that Law, which is extremely stringent, the men in question came distinctly within the category of deserters, as therein defined.

I may further add that, although the deputation did not leave with the Porte the address for presentation to the Sultan, the copy of it which had been forwarded to me before the deputation arrived, with a request that it should be given to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, was translated into Turkish, and sent to his Majesty.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 252.

Mr. Lindsay to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 17.)

Tyrone House, Belfast, April 16, 1875.

My Lord,

AT a meeting held yesterday in this town, of ministers and gentlemen of various denominations, the subject of the recent persecutions in Turkey was considered, and a Resolution, of which I beg to inclose a copy, was unanimously passed, and which, as Mayor of the town, I was requested to forward to your Lordship, in your capacity as Her Majesty's Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

If I may take the liberty of expressing an opinion in relation to Turkish affairs—so far as England is concerned—if Great Britain is to regain much of the great influence she has lost during the last few years on the shores of the Bosphorus, Smyrna, and other important Turkish centres in the East, the Foreign Office will speedily need as Her Majesty's Representative a gentleman of more force of character and tact than Sir Henry Elliot.

I speak not thus from distant hearsay, but from what I myself saw and heard last spring, when visiting the localities referred to, and from mingling freely amongst all intelligent classes.

If any apology is needed in thus expressing myself, I may add that some years ago I had the honour of a correspondence with your late noble and gifted father on an important and long-vexed Treasury and Post Office, Irish, question, and which I got arranged to his and his Chancellor's entire satisfactisn, and at a saving of 15,000*l.* per annum to the Treasury; and that I am known personally to Lord Cairns, Mr. Cross, and Mr. Ward Hunt.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOS. G. LINDSAY,
Mayor of Belfast.

Inclosure in No. 252.

Resolution.

Belfast, April 15, 1875.

MOVED by the Mayor of Belfast (T. G. Lindsay, Esq.,) seconded by Charles Finlay, Esq., J.P., and carried unanimously:—

That this meeting has been gratified to learn the steps taken by the Council of the Evangelical Alliance in aid of their persecuted brethren in Turkey, especially in sending out a deputation to Constantinople to plead with His Majesty the Sultan, and with the Turkish Government, for the redress of wrongs committed in violation of the Hatti-Sheriff granting religious liberty to all subjects of the Ottoman Empire. This meeting resolves that as neither the representations of the British Government, nor the respectful request of the numerous signatories to the Address, has received the favourable attention that was due to them, the Council of the Alliance be requested to continue their efforts, assured of the support of all friends of religious liberty in Belfast, as in other places throughout the United Kingdom.

No. 253.

Lord Tenterden to Mr. Lindsay.

Foreign Office, April 22, 1875.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant, inclosing a copy of a resolution which was passed at a meeting in Belfast on the subject of the steps recently taken by the Evangelical Alliance in aid of religious liberty in Turkey.

I am, &c.

(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 254.

Mr. Sandbach to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 27.)

Manchester, April 26, 1875.

My Lord,

I HAVE been requested to forward to your Lordship a copy of the resolutions passed at a meeting lately held at the house of Mr. Henry Lee, J. P., at Sedgley Park, on the subject of the recent religious persecutions in Turkey.

Permit me to add that the support given by your Lordship to the efforts already made for the relief of the Christians suffering on account of their religious faith was gratefully appreciated.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN E. SANDBACH,
Secretary of the Manchester Branch of the Evangelical Alliance.

Inclosure in No. 254.

Resolution passed at a Meeting held in the House of Henry Lee, Esq., Sedgley Park, Manchester, on Wednesday evening, April 7, 1875.

MOVED by Richard Haworth, Esq.; seconded by Henry Lee, Esq.; supported by John Rylands, Esq., and carried unanimously:—

The meeting has heard with much interest the statements of several members of the deputation that lately proceeded to Constantinople on behalf of Christians suffering religious persecution in Turkey.

It desires to express its regret that the deputation representing so large and influential a body of Christians of various countries were not allowed the opportunity of laying before His Majesty the Sultan the Memorial narrating the facts so contrary to the terms of the Imperial Decree, granting full religious liberty to all His Majesty's subjects.

This meeting approves the course taken by the Council of the Evangelical Alliance in endeavouring to obtain protection for our Christian brethren in Turkey, and would assure them of the support which Christians in Manchester are ready to give them in furtherance of the object desired.

No. 255.

Mr. Brooke to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 29.)

Caney Hill House, Dundrum, Dublin, April 27, 1875.

My Lord,

I HAVE been requested to transmit to you the enclosed resolutions passed at a meeting of which I had the honour to be chairman, and earnestly and respectfully to invite the attention of Her Majesty's Government to a subject which deeply interests the friends of religious liberty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM BROOKE.

Inclosure in No. 255.

Resolution.

AT a meeting of the Dublin Branch of the Evangelical Alliance held in Dublin April 9th 1875, the Right Honourable William Brooke in the chair, the following resolution was moved by J. H. Swantin, Esq., J.P.

Seconded by the Rev. W. B. Kirkpatrick, D.D., supported by the Rev. Edward Norman, M.A., and carried unanimously:—

That after hearing statements relative to recent transactions in Turkey sustained by the testimony of Christian Ministers and others resident in Lattakia, Damascus, Beyrout, Marash, and Constantinople, and bearing in mind the correspondence which has appeared in the public journals, this meeting expresses its deliberate conviction painful instances of religious persecution have occurred and continue to be suffered by converts to Christianity, in direct violation of the Hatti-Sheriff granting full religious liberty to all subjects of His Majesty the Sultan.

This meeting further expresses its entire approval of the steps taken by the Council of the Evangelical Alliance in this matter and its deep regret that the humble request contained in the Address to the Sultan should not, up to the present time, have been complied with, it would urge upon the Council to take such further steps as may be thought wise and needful for the release of their persecuted brethren, and assures the Council that it may rely upon the strenuous support of the friends of religious freedom throughout this land.

No. 256.

Lord Tenterden to Mr. Sandbach.

Foreign Office, April 29, 1875.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th instant, inclosing a copy of the resolution which was passed at a meeting held at the house of Mr. Henry Lee, on the subject of religious liberty in Turkey.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 257.

Mr. Lister to Mr. Brooke.

Foreign Office, April 30, 1875.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th instant, inclosing a copy of the Resolutions which were passed at a meeting held in Dublin on the subject of religious liberty in Turkey.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 258.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 10.)

(No. 211.)

Constantinople, April 26, 1875.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 111, directing me to report upon the various matters to which the Evangelical Alliance have called attention, and give my opinion whether the interference of Her Majesty's Government is called for or could properly be exercised in regard to any of them.

Three days before your Lordship's despatch reached me I had received from Mr. Sandison the accompanying report, informing me officially from Safvet Pasha of the removal of the prohibition against the printing of the Bible.

It is long since I received the assurance that the Porte would not retract the promise given by the late Aali Pasha for the free circulation of the Scriptures; but it is only now that I have been able to obtain from the Minister for Foreign Affairs the formal declaration now given, and the transmission of the necessary orders to the Minister of Police.

That there was a disposition on the part of the Porte to prevent the circulation of the Bible is evident, and that I considered Her Majesty's Government entitled to object to such a prohibition, after the assurances that had formerly been given, may be gathered from the remonstrances which I at once made against it, without waiting for any instructions from your Lordship.

It must, however, in fairness, be admitted that the arguments on the side of the Turks were not without their weight.

They said that, while the free exercise of his religion was guaranteed to each of the Sultan's subjects, the right of making proselytes from the religion of the State neither had been nor was intended to be given.

When the permission for the circulation of the Scriptures was granted, it was in the belief that they were destined for the Christian populations, but it had become notorious that the Turkish versions were intended chiefly for distribution among the Mahomedans, in the hope of converting them from their faith, and the injudicious proceedings of some of the colporteurs, which were regretted and disapproved by their employers, of whom it is impossible to speak too highly, gave rise to feelings of hostility on the part of the authorities and the Mussulman public.

With respect to the other points raised by the Evangelical Alliance, I am unable to add anything to what I have already stated to your Lordship in my correspondence on this subject.

The case of the family from Marash was a distinct instance of persecution, and there was an unjustifiable delay in carrying out the engagement that they should be free in every respect, except as regards their return to Marash.

The case of the Ansairiyeh conscripts has been so fully dealt with in my previous despatches that it will be unnecessary for me to do more than repeat the conviction that the statement in the address to the Sultan that the men had been taken because they were Christians was incorrect.

The stress laid upon the fact that no conscription was going on at the time they were taken was attributable to ignorance of the law of recruitment, for it would otherwise have been known that if the men had not appeared at the proper place and time to establish their claims for exemption, they were liable at any moment, whether the conscription was going on or not, as deserters, and this law is now being enforced throughout the Empire with much more strictness than was formerly the case.

In reply, therefore, to your Lordship's question, I cannot hesitate to express the opinion on the part of Her Majesty's Government is uncalled for and would be undesirable.

That there have been isolated cases of ill treatment of converts is not to be denied; but it can be affirmed with confidence that nothing of a nature of a persecution of Christians is going on.

The native Protestants only complain that they have been kept in a position of inferiority which enabled the other Christian denominations to domineer over and oppress them.

The Greeks and Armenians, who form the immense majority of the Christian populations, make no complaint, nor do the Roman Catholics, with the exception of those known as Hassounists, whose hardships arise from political causes, and were provoked by the encroachments of Rome.

Your Lordship has very recently received from Salonica the testimony of the large Jewish community of that place to the spirit of toleration which they have met with, and from the whole of the non-Mussulman populations of the Empire no complaints are heard excepting there, where the activity of foreign missionaries has excited jealousy and resistance.

I would beg your Lordship not to suppose that I undervalue the benefits that missionaries confer on this country, especially by their continuing efforts in the cause of education, but that it is the indiscreet zeal of some of their number which provokes most of the grievances complained of admits, in my opinion, of no doubt.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 258.

Mr. Sandison to Sir H. Elliot.

Pera, April 20, 1875.

Sir,

IN reply to the representations which have been made by this Embassy on the subject of the prohibition applying to the printing of the Bible at Constantinople, I have the honour to state that I have been specially authorized by Safvet Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to convey to your Excellency the formal assurance that this restriction being now removed, no impediment shall be offered hereafter to the free printing of the Bible in this capital.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 259.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 212. Confidential.)

Constantinople, April 26, 1875.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 211 upon the questions raised by the Evangelical Alliance, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the Alliance gets its information and inspirations almost exclusively from the missionaries, chiefly American, and of Presbyterian or Congregationalist denominations; most of them men of exemplary character, but generally narrow-minded and domineering, and intolerant of any form of Protestantism except that which they themselves profess.

In corroboration of this, I beg leave to appeal to the testimony of the Bishop of Jerusalem, who in a private and confidential letter which I lately received from him,

invoked my assistance in favour of the Protestant Bishop Miguerditch, for whom I am endeavouring to obtain permission to build a church at Aintab, near Aleppo.

In this letter his Lordship attributes the difficulties which have been experienced to the opposition of the Armenians and the American missionaries, whom he affirms to be "more intolerant than the Turks."

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 260.

Mr. Lister to the Rev. C. Jackson.

Foreign Office, May 15, 1875.

Sir,

WITH reference to Lord Tenterden's letter of the 9th ultimo, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that a report, dated the 20th ultimo, has been received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, stating that, in reply to the representations which had been made by Her Majesty's Embassy regarding the prohibition against the printing of the Bible at Constantinople, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs had officially communicated to Sir Henry Elliot the formal assurance that the restriction had been removed, and that no impediment would be offered hereafter to the free printing of the Bible in that capital.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

No. 261.

The Rev. J. Davis to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 31.)

Evangelical Alliance, 7, Adam Street, Strand, London, May 31, 1875.

My Lord,

REFERRING to the interview which your Lordship was kind enough to grant, on the 6th ultimo, to a deputation that waited on you to place in your Lordship's hands a resolution passed at a meeting held at Lord Ebury's (moved by the Archbishop of Canterbury and seconded by Lord Lawrence), on the subject of the religious persecutions in Turkey, I am desired to inquire of your Lordship if the British Ambassador at Constantinople has been instructed to present to His Majesty the Sultan the address left with his Excellency by a deputation of British signatories, and if any reply has been received.

From communications made to the Council of this Alliance, it appears that as regards the Ansairiyeh converts removed to Beyrout, no change has taken place in their condition or treatment. Gentlemen now in this country, who recently saw them, state that, although forced into the army, these Christian men are entirely without pay; that their clothing was filthy, insufficient, and only the cast-off clothing of others; and that, notwithstanding statements of their having been removed from the mission schools in order to serve as soldiers, they had not even been put through their drill, but were employed only as the meanest drudges in the regiment.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) JAMES DAVIS.

No. 262.

Lord Tenterden to the Rev. J. Davis.

Foreign Office, June 4, 1875.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ultimo, inquiring if the British Ambassador at Constantinople has been instructed to present to his Majesty the Sultan the address left with his Excellency by the deputation of the Evangelical Alliance, and if any answer has been received; and I am to state to you in reply that, although Lord Derby was ready to assist the deputation in their visit to Constantinople, so far as the good offices of Her Majesty's Embassy could properly be

rendered to them, he did not feel justified in instructing Her Majesty's Ambassador to present the address to the Sultan, and regrets, therefore, to have been unable to meet the wishes of the Evangelical Alliance in this respect.

I am, &c.

(Signed) TENTERDEN.